THE CHILD'S GUIDE SERIES

GUIDE TO THE BIBLE

GEORGE HODGES

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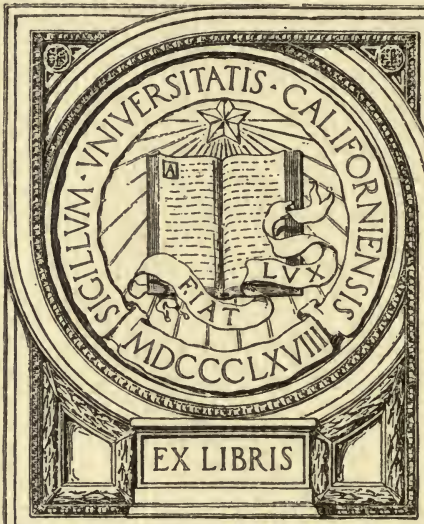

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A CHILD'S GUIDE TO THE BIBLE

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CHRIST BLESSING LITTLE CHILDREN

A CHILD'S GUIDE TO THE BIBLE

BY

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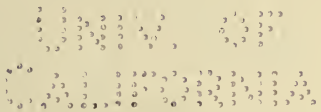

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INTRODUCTION

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THE BOOKS OF THE BIBLE

THE word Bible means "the books." The Bible looks like one book, for it is all contained within a single pair of covers. But when it is examined it is found to be made of sixty-seven books bound together.

Sometimes the Bible is printed in such small letters that it will go easily into a coat pocket. Sometimes it is printed in such large letters that a child of ten would find it almost too heavy to carry, and a child of five could not carry it at all. But big or little, the Bible is always sixty-seven books in one.

It is as if you were to take sixty-seven books off the shelves of a book case and send them to a printer and say, "These are to be printed page after page, and then bound into one book." The printer would say, "Such a book would be too large. It would be bigger than a volume of the Encyclopaedia; it would be bigger than the Unabridged Dictionary. Nobody could handle

such a book." But that would depend on the size of the sixty-seven books.

One reason why the Bible books are bound together is that some of them are so very small. Thus in the middle of the Bible are sixteen books of sermons, beginning with Isaiah; and sometimes there is only one sermon in the book; and some of these sermons are so short that they may easily be read aloud, from beginning to end, in less than ten minutes. And near the end of the Bible are twenty-one books of letters, beginning with Romans; a few of these are long, but others are hardly more than notes, and do not fill the whole of a single printed page. These little writings, by themselves, might be lost. They are bound up with the others for safe keeping.

When we say, then, that there are sixty-seven books of the Bible, we do not mean that they are all good-sized books, such as we have on our shelves, for that would make a volume quite too big. There are sixty-seven different pieces, long and short, each with its own writer, and its own subject and its own title.

Another reason for putting all these together between two covers is for convenience. They are all concerned with religion. They are about the

same Person, and were written by people of the same race. The writers of these sixty-seven books were Jews, and they wrote them to tell what God had done for their fathers and for them, and what God would do for all the people of the earth. Taken together, the different writings make a single, long, connected history.

Sometimes fathers and mothers who are good at telling stories, tell a long, long story which lasts a year, or longer than that. Every week, or every day, there is something more to tell. The Bible is the longest story in the world, for it took more than a thousand years to tell it. One began, and another continued, new ones coming forward, year after year, to take the places of the earlier writers, and new and wonderful things happening, until at last the book was ended. Thus, about seven hundred and fifty years before the birth of Christ, men were gathering together and writing down the chapters of the first book of the Bible. But the stories and the songs which are in that book had been in the memory of the people for hundreds and hundreds of years, nobody knows how long. They had been told and sung thousands and thousands of times before they were written. The

last book of the Bible was written perhaps a hundred years after the birth of Christ.

Not only were these sixty-seven books written at very different times, but they were written in very different places. The writers of a good many of them lived in Jerusalem; but some of them lived in Babylon. Part of the Bible was written in Asia Minor, at Ephesus; part in Greece, at Corinth; part in Italy, at Rome. These writers used two very different languages. The Old Testament was composed in Hebrew, the New Testament in Greek.

The name Testament, which is thus given to the two great divisions of the Bible, means a promise. It was God who made the promise, speaking in the hearts of good men, and sending them to tell their neighbors. The promise was that God would be good to us and bless us.

We are so sure of that today that it seems to us as if people must have known it always. But that is not so. Even now, there are countries where they are not at all sure that God is good, or desires our good. They are terribly afraid of God, and are all the time offering sacrifices to persuade God not to hurt them. This is the idea of God which they get from thunder and lightning, from

storms and floods and fires and pestilences. It is only in the Bible that we are told, over and over again, and in spite of all the ills of life, that God cares for us and loves us, and does always what is right and best.

In the Old Testament, this assurance of God's goodness is made only to the Jews. That is because the Jews were best able to understand it.

When a man of science wishes to say something new and important about astronomy or geology, he does not say it to the men who are working in a mill, or to the boys and girls who are studying in a public school. The time will come, if the discovery is really important, when everybody will know about it. But the first report is made to men of science who can understand it. Then these men may go and tell about it in simpler words to other people. It was for this reason that God spoke about religion to the Jews, because they knew more about religion than any other people in the world. He made the Greeks the teachers of the world in art and philosophy, because they were the best philosophers and art sts. He made the Latins the teachers of the world in law, because they were the best lawyers. But he appointed the Jews to teach the world religion.

The lessons which the Jews themselves learned that they might teach them to their neighbors, are in the Old Testament. They begin with the very alphabet of religion and go on little by little, into the higher grades. Thus they learned that God is, but they thought that God came down into the Garden of Eden and walked about under the trees. Afterwards they realized that "no man hath seen God at any time." And they learned that God is merciful, but they thought that one time when God was about to destroy the people of Israel, Moses rebuked Him so that He changed His mind. Afterwards, they came to know that God is not only wiser than any man,—so that not even Moses could teach Him,—but that He is more merciful than any man. The Bible, then, is an account of how the Jews, under the instruction of God, learned what to believe and what to do. It describes how they went to school to God. There were other schools, for God was teaching every nation, as He is still. But of all the schools, this was the best.

In the New Testament, the great lessons go on. But there are two differences. One is that in the Old Testament the teachers who teach the lessons of God are patriarchs and poets and prophets;

but in the New Testament the supreme teacher is Jesus Christ, the Son of God. The other is that in the New Testament all the lessons are taught to the Jews; but in the New Testament the teachers go out to teach all nations.

PROSE AND POETRY

THE sixty-seven books which are bound together to make the Bible are some of them in prose and some in poetry.

Commonly, poetry and prose look different. Take, for example, a volume of Longfellow. Here are poems, long and short; some in rhyme, like "Paul Revere's Ride," some without rhyme, like the "Courtship of Miles Standish"; but every page looking unlike any page of prose. In the Bible, the difference between prose and poetry is not so plain, for here the poetry has been made over into prose.

It is like what Mr. Church has done in his three familiar translations of great classics for English and American children. The Iliad and the Odyssey, in the Greek in which they were written by Homer, and the Aeneid, in the Latin in which it was written by Virgil, are in the form of poetry, line after line, like our poems. But Mr. Church gave them to us in prose. Indeed, it is impossible to take the poetry of one language and turn it into

the same poetry in another language. For poetry, as you see at once, depends not only on the thoughts but on the words. When the words are changed, the poetical form is changed. It is true that Mr. Church, in retelling those old poems of Homer and Virgil, made other changes in order to make the books more interesting to boys and girls. But when Professor Palmer translated the Odyssey, he kept every thought just as it was in Greek, only he did not try to make the Greek verses into English verses.

That is what was done when the Bible books called Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes and Solomon's Song were brought over into English out of Hebrew. In some English Bibles, they are printed in lines somewhat like poetry, but in most Bibles they look like prose.

The prose books, of which the greater part of the Bible is composed, are of two kinds. There are books whose purpose is to tell what men have believed and done in the past; and there are books whose purpose is to tell what men ought to believe and to do in the present.

The first half of the Old Testament and the first half of the New are made up of the writings which describe what has been believed and done

by the men of the old time. These are history books.

In the Old Testament, they begin with Genesis, and come on, book after book, to the end of Second Kings; telling the story of the beginnings of the world and of the Hebrews, how Abraham came out of Mesopotamia and how Moses brought the people out of Egypt, how they conquered the land of Canaan and settled there, and grew to be a strong nation, how one part of the nation quarrelled with the other part, so that they divided and became two nations, and finally how stronger peoples from the east, Assyrians and Chaldeans, came and destroyed first one nation and then the other, and carried them both off into exile. Then the history begins over again with First Chronicles, the first word of which is "Adam," and comes down over the same ground as before, in the earlier part rapidly, telling the same story, and continues, in Ezra and Nehemiah, the record of the Hebrews, how they came back from their exile when both the Assyrians and the Chaldeans were conquered by the Persians, and rebuilt the city of Jerusalem and the temple in the midst of it.

In the New Testament, the history books begin with Matthew and give four different accounts of

the life of Christ, and then describe the beginning of the Christian Church, especially in the ministry of St. Peter and in the ministry of St. Paul.

The last half of the Old Testament,—after the books of poetry in the middle—and the last half of the New are made up of writings which tell people what they ought to believe and do. One way in which to give this good advice is to speak to them face to face, either in a talk in private, or in a sermon in public. The Old Testament books of advice are mostly sermons. The men who preached these sermons were called prophets, and they did much more than quietly advise men. They denounced their sins; they told them in the plainest kind of language that they were bringing upon themselves the displeasure of God, and that unless they changed their ways they would be punished. Many of the prophets preached in the days when the Assyrians and Chaldeans were coming with their invading armies, and they said that the reason for these distresses was the wickedness of the people.

Another way in which to tell people what they should believe and do is to write to them. The New Testament books of advice are mostly letters. St. Paul wrote most of these letters, but other good

men wrote some others. They begin with the address of the persons to whom they are written, and at the end the writer asks to be remembered to various friends. They answer questions, like our letters. All of them are about religion, and some of them sound more like sermons than letters, but they were written, like our letters, to persons at a distance, and were given to the postman, or to some travelling friend to carry.

MAKING THE BOOKS

ONE way to make a book is to take a pen and ink, and write it. Most books are made that way. The writer learns a great deal, and thinks a great deal, and then puts it all down, page after page, in a book. But another way to make a book is to take a pair of scissors and a pot of paste, and select good things from many books and put them together.

Many books of poetry are made in this second way. For instance, hymn books. Nobody writes a hymn book. What is done is to gather together a number of hymns which were written at very different times, by different persons, sometimes in different countries. Thus in one book there may be a hymn which was first written in Greek, in the fourth century, and is still sung in that language in Greece; and another which was first written in Latin, in the twelfth century, and is still sung in that language in Italy; and another which was written in this country a few years ago, to be sung at the revival meetings conducted by Mr. Moody.

The maker of a hymn book selects the religious poetry which he thinks is best suited to be sung in church. Sometimes the name of the writer of each hymn is printed at the end of the hymn, but sometimes not. People easily forget who wrote any of the hymns. The authors are not of any particular interest to them. Few persons remember who wrote even the most familiar hymns, like "Rock of Ages," or "Nearer, my God, to Thee." By-and-by, somebody else takes the old hymn book, leaves out some hymns, adds many others, and thus makes a new book. Year by year, such books grow.

Thus, in the Bible, the Book of Psalms grew. Some psalms have the name of the writer, or of the supposed writer, printed at the top. Thus many psalms are said to have been written by David, one by Moses. Sometimes a psalm is dated, like the one-hundred-and-thirty-seventh. This begins, "By the rivers of Babylon." That shows that it was written hundreds of years after the days of David, when the Hebrews were in exile in Babylon. Thus century by century the psalm book grew. The names of the writers of most of the psalms are altogether forgotten. The book was made by gathering together pieces of religious

poetry written at different times, in different places, and by different people. The Book of Proverbs was composed in the same way.

Books of history are made by this process of collection. The historian, unless he is describing what he has seen with his own eyes, and heard with his own ears, prepares to write his history by reading old records. He tries to find accounts of battles written by men who were actually in the battles, and descriptions of heroes written by men who actually knew them. He gathers together old laws. He copies down pages from old books. And all these he brings into his history. Sometimes, the maker of a book of history studies these old writings and tells us in his own words what they mean. Sometimes he takes the writings and puts them in his book in the old words, and leaves us to find out the meaning, as best we may. Sometimes, finding two different accounts of the same event, he gives us both of them, and leaves us to compare them. Thus history books, like hymn books, are not written by one man. The writer makes use of the writings of many men.

Thus it was that the history books of the Bible were made. Sometimes the Bible historian tells

us in what older books he found the facts which he reports. He refers, for example, to the Book of the Kings of Judah and Israel (II Chronicles 25:26), or to the Book of Jasher (II Samuel 1:18). Out of one book he takes an account of a war, out of another he copies an old song. Sometimes, when he found two forms of the same story, either in different books, or in the memory of different people, he put in both. Thus you see at once that the account of the creation of the world is given in one form in the first chapter of Genesis, and in another form in the second chapter. In the first chapter, at the beginning of all things is a great deep; in the second chapter, at the beginning is a great desert. Also, in the first chapter man is made after the animals; in the second chapter, before the animals.

These differences are not of any importance, because the Bible is not a book of geology, but a book of theology. Geology is an account of the earth, its rocks and hills. Theology is an account of God, His will, His love, and His dealings with men. The purpose of the Bible is to make us "wise unto salvation." If we wish to be wise as to science or history, we go to other books.

But the differences, while they are not impor-

tant, are of great interest because they show us the Bible in the making. We see the actual pieces which the historian had in his hand. Instead of studying the two accounts, and deciding between them himself, taking one and leaving out the other, he gave us both, side by side.

Thus we see that the history books of the Bible were made in somewhat the same manner as they built the church at Jamestown. The old church at Jamestown having fallen into ruins, and nothing being left of it except the tower, a new church was built on the same spot in memory of the landing of the English settlers in 1607. But they did not use new brick. On the ground, and under the ground, they found old brick, some of which had once formed part of the wall of the old church, and these they built into the new building.

The differences in the accounts given of the same event show that the historian was using materials which were already very old. Imagine, for instance, a tribe of people emigrating into a new country. They have their flocks and herds with them, and their encampment, whenever they stop to rest, extends over a great space of plain and forest. Some are before, some are behind. Then something happens; those who are before push on

over a range of hills, and suddenly there is a heavy storm of snow, and those who are behind stay back. They go into winter quarters, with the high hills between them. In the spring, they like the country and settle where they are, separated by the mountains. And they become separate nations. Now these separate nations have at first the same traditions and memories; they remember the same ancestors and heroes and history; they have the same accounts of the past. But year after year, as they live apart, little differences will arise in these accounts. Sometimes names will be changed, sometimes numbers will be less here and greater there. For that is human nature. No two persons will tell the same story in just the same way. Then suppose that after a long time the two nations become one again. Suppose that one nation is driven by enemies over the hills, and joins the other nation. And suppose that somebody writes a history of the old days when the two nations were one before, and of the ancestors and heroes which they have in common. He will find two forms of stories. Sometimes he may combine the two, sometimes he may keep them both with all their differences.

This, in a way, is what happened to the accounts

of the ancient world which appear at the beginning of the Bible. Except that the event which separated the Hebrews into two nations was not a snowstorm, but a war. They fought together and then lived apart. Thus they told the old stories in gradually differing ways; in one form in the south, in the nation of Judah; in another form in the north, in the nation of Israel. Long afterwards the two forms were set down side by side, in the book of Genesis and in other books of Bible history.

Thus the Bible books were made; some of them written straight along by the writer out of his own mind and heart, as God helped him; some of them collected together out of materials already very old.

THE BIBLE IN HEBREW. GREEK AND LATIN

1. The Hebrew Bible.—Three interpretations.
   (1) The Targum.—A free translation out of Hebrew into Aramaic, the language of the people after the Exile.
   (2) The Talmud.—A commentary.
   (3) The Massorah.—The Bible not with consonants only, but for the first time adding vowels.
2. The Greek Bible: The Septuagint (begun third century B. C.)—Three ancient copies.
   (1) Codex Alexandrinus, in British Museum written in fifth century A. D.
   (2) Codex Vaticanus, in Vatican Library, Rome. Written in fourth century.
   (3) Codex Sinaiticus, in Imperial Library, St. Petersburg. Written in fourth century.
3. The Latin Bible: The Vulgate (fourth century A. D.)

THE Bible was written in three languages which are no longer anywhere spoken. Once they were as easy and familiar as our own language is to us, and were spoken by babies who were learning to walk and talk. But gradually the times, changed, and the common speech of men

changed with them. Thus it became necessary to translate the Bible. It had to be taken over out of these ancient languages into the living words of living men.

When the Bible was written, the English language did not exist. Not an Englishman had as yet set foot in England. The English lived in the middle part of the peninsula which we now call Denmark, and were a wild race of warriors on the land and pirates on the sea. All quiet and civilized people were as afraid of them as the settlers of America were afraid of Indians. Some of the words which they used have come down from them to us. They said "ham," meaning "home"; and "tun," meaning "town." Most of our days of the week are called for their gods: thus Wednesday is the day of Woden, their god of war; and Thursday is the day of Thor, their god of storm; and Friday is the day of Frea, their god of peace. Our festival of Easter is named from Eostre, their goddess of the spring. But the men who wrote the Bible had never in their lives heard any of these words, and did not know that such a race of people as the English lived on the face of the earth. When the English appeared in Britain, and began the invasion which changed its name to England, the

last book of the Bible had been ended almost four hundred years.

So the books of the Bible were written in other languages than ours.

The Old Testament was written, for the most part, in Hebrew. One difference between Hebrew and English is that in reading a Hebrew book one begins at what we call the end; the last page, as it seems to us, is the first page. Also, one reads from right to left, instead of reading, as we do, from left to right; and every word is made in that same way, —as if we were to write the name Hebrew this way: werbeH. That has a strange look even in English letters, but the Hebrew itself looks stranger still, because even the letters are different. Here, for example, are the first two verses of the book of Genesis in Hebrew:

בְּרֵאשִׁית בָּרָא אֱלֹהִים אֵת הַשָּׁמַיִם וְאֵת הָאָרֶץ׃ וְהָאָרֶץ
הָיְתָה תֹהוּ וָבֹהוּ וְחֹשֶׁךְ עַל־פְּנֵי תְהוֹם וְרוּחַ אֱלֹהִים
מְרַחֶפֶת עַל־פְּנֵי הַמָּיִם׃

There was a time when all the people who lived in the land of the Jews used this Hebrew language, and the Bible was written in it, just as our books are made in English. But the great wars, which for a time almost destroyed the Hebrew nation,

drove many of the Jews out of Palestine into Egypt. Large numbers of them settled in Alexandria. Now, Alexandria, as the name shows, was a Greek city. It was founded by Alexander, the Greek conqueror of Egypt. And in Alexandria the common language was Greek. The Jews learned it. They liked it better than Hebrew, and their children spoke it as their native tongue. Thus it came about that the Old Testament books, when they were read at the time of divine service, were in a language which the congregation could no longer understand. The custom was to have men who knew both languages explain to the hearers what the Hebrew reading meant, but this was not a satisfactory arrangement. So the Jews of Alexandria desired to have the Bible in Greek.

Many other Jews felt the same way, for they went not only into Egypt but into Asia Minor, buying and selling, and settled in all the busy towns; and everywhere the speech which everybody understood was Greek. Thus the Jews desired a Greek Bible not only for their own use but that they might show it to their neighbors, and let them see what their sacred books really said.

Thus it came about that about two hundred and fifty years before the birth of Christ the work was

begun of translating the Hebrew Bible into Greek. Long after, when the Greek Bible had come to be held as sacred as the Hebrew, and almost all of the circumstances of the translation had been forgotten, they used to tell a remarkable story about it.

They said that King Ptolemy of Egypt wished to have a copy of the Bible for the great library which he was collecting at Alexandria. So he sent to Jerusalem to get one. His ambassadors came in state to the high priest in the temple, bringing splendid gifts, and when they returned seventy-two men went with them, six from each of the twelve tribes of Israel. They were all wise men, who knew Greek as well as Hebrew, and every one carried in one hand a writer's inkhorn and a bundle of pens, and in the other hand a box in which was the Old Testament in Hebrew, each book written on a separate roll. The seventy-two were graciously received by the King of Egypt, who gave them a royal banquet; and the next morning they set to work. Seventy-two rooms were provided for the seventy-two translators, and there they labored for seventy-two days. In the afternoon of the seventy-second day all of the seventy-two doors opened at the same moment,

and out came the translators, each with his translation under his arm. And when the translations were compared, they were all alike, without the difference of a single word!

It did not happen quite that way. But the story gave a name to the Greek Old Testament, which is called the Septuagint, meaning the Seventy. It is true that the translation was begun in the reign of the Ptolemy who lived in the two hundred and fiftieth year before Christ; but at that time some of the Old Testament books were not written, others had been begun but were not completed. The work of changing the Hebrew into Greek took longer than seventy-two days, or even seventy-two years. It was probably finished about a hundred and fifty years before Christ.

The Septuagint was the first book of any considerable length ever translated from one language to another. It came at once into general use. In the time of our Lord it was used even in Palestine. The early Christians read the Old Testament translated into Greek as we read the Old Testament translated into English. Almost all of the Old Testament passages in the New Testament are taken from the Septuagint translation.

The New Testament was written in Greek.

Even when St. Paul wrote to the Romans, he wrote in Greek. This language, as you know, begins its books with the page next to the left hand cover, as we do; and is read from left to right like English; but its letters, while not so strange as the Hebrew, are still quite different from ours. Here, for example, are the first two verses of the gospel of St. Mark in Greek.

I. 1. ΑΡΧΗ τοῦ εὐαγγελίου Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ, υἱοῦ τοῦ Θεοῦ[1].
2. ὡς[2] γέγραπται ἐν τοῖς προφήταις,[3] "Ἰδού ἐγὼ[4] ἀποστέλλω
τὸν ἄγγελόν μου πρὸ προσώπου σου, ὃς κατασκευάσει τὴν ὁδόν

Then the New Testament was added to the Old, and the whole Bible was in Greek.

For a long time, Greek was the common language of civilized people. Almost everybody who could read at all, could read Greek. But the rulers of the world were Romans, and the Roman language was Latin. Gradually, in the western part of the Roman Empire, Latin took the place of Greek. Greek continued to be used in the east. But the rest desired to have the Bible in their own language.

The Latin language is somewhat known today, even to those who cannot read it, partly because we use the Latin letters, and partly because a great many of our words are taken over, with little

change, from the Latin. Thus the thirteenth verse of the fifth chapter of the Revelation, which we read, "And every creature which is in Heaven, and on earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever," in the Latin reads thus:

> Et omnem creaturam, quae in coelo est, et super terram, et sub terra, et quae sunt in mari, et quae in eo, omnes audivi dicentes, sedenti in throno, et agno, benedictio et honor, et gloria et potetestas in saecula saeculorum.

You see how our words "creature," and "throne," and "benediction," and "honor," and "glory" are Latin words.

The demand for a Latin Bible increased, and various translations were made. At last, about four hundred years after Christ, a great scholar made a Latin translation of the whole Bible. It was so good that it took the place of all the others, and came to be called the Vulgate, meaning the Bible in common use. The name of this scholar was Jerome. By that time, few people in western

Europe could read Greek, and hardly anybody could read even a sentence of Hebrew. Everybody knew one Hebrew word, which we all use today, the word *Amen;* but that was as far as their acquaintance went. Jerome learned Hebrew, he was a master of Greek, and Latin was his native tongue. So the bishop of Rome asked him, as the best scholar of his time, to translate the Bible into Latin. He spent fourteen years at this work, living in Bethlehem. At the end, there was the whole Bible, from Genesis to Revelation, all in Latin.

The Greek translation, the Septuagint, took the place of the Hebrew Bible in the east, and is read today in all the churches of that part of the country, in Greece and in Russia. The Latin translation, the Vulgate, became the Bible of the west, and is still read in the service of all Roman Catholic churches. All educated persons, no matter what European country they lived in, understood Latin. They talked it, as we talk English.

THE BIBLE IN ENGLISH

1. In the fourteenth century.—Wycliffe's Bible, 1380.
2. In the sixteenth century (and beginning of seventeenth)
   1. Three versions, each bearing a translator's name, culminating in Great Bible.
      (1) Tyndale's, 1525–1535.
      (2) Coverdale's, 1535.
      (3) Matthew's = Tyndale's + Coverdale's.
      (4) The Great Bible, 1539.
   2. Three versions, each bearing a party name, culminating in King James' Bible.
      (1) Genevan (Puritan) 1560.
      (2) Bishops' (Anglican) 1568.
      (3) Douai (Roman) 1582.
      (4) King James' Version, 1611.
   3. In the nineteenth century.—Revised Version, 1881–1885.

SO the Bible was translated out of Hebrew into Greek for the eastern Christians who spoke Greek, and out of Hebrew and Greek into Latin for the western Christians who spoke Latin. But there appeared other people, with other languages.

The river Rhine and the river Danube, rising not far apart, draw a line across the map of Europe.

North of these rivers lived the Goths, and their cousins the Angles and Saxons, who became the English, and other related tribes. They spoke neither Hebrew nor Greek nor Latin, but had a language which was somewhat like German. It resembled German as the English of a child of eighteen months resembles the English of a youth of eighteen years.

These northern tribes kept coming down across the two rivers to attack the civilized people, who below the Rhine spoke Latin, and below the Danube, Greek. And in the peaceful intervals between these wars, Christian missionaries taught these wild people the Christian religion.

The most famous of these missionaries was named Ulfilas. He was a Goth who had learned Greek and Latin. He wished to have his people know the Bible, and there see what kind of honest and friendly lives God would have men live. But he saw that the Bible, in order to do any good to any large number of his people, must be read to them in their own language. Accordingly he himself undertook to translate it. That was before the making of the Vulgate. Jerome was then a boy in school. A part of the New Testament, as Ulfilas translated it, is still preserved in Sweden, at

Upsala, written in letters of silver on pages of purple vellum. One can see in it the German language, and even the English, in their beginnings; like a child, as I said, learning to speak. Thus the first two words of the Lord's Prayer, which in German are *Vater unser,* in the Gothic of Ulfilas are *Atta unsar;* and where we say "thy name," he said *namo thein.*

Still the Latin Bible continued to be read everywhere in Europe. The time came when almost everybody in France spoke French, and almost everybody in Germany spoke German, and almost everybody in England spoke English, and Latin was understood only by ministers and lawyers and teachers and other exceptionally educated persons. Many of these people wished to have the Bible in their own language, but there was a feeling among the learned that it would be irreverent to put the sacred writings into such common words. The Bible belonged, they said, to Hebrew and Greek and Latin, to the ancient languages in which the inscription on the cross had been written by Pontius Pilate, and not to new, undignified and vulgar tongues, like German or French or English.

And the truth is that these languages not only seemed crude and queer to educated persons at

that time, but they seem quite as queer to us. Today, only scholars, and they with much difficulty, can read them in their old forms. To translate the Bible into such strange and awkward speech was like translating it today into the grammar and spelling of people who have never been to school.

But the common languages were improving, and, anyhow, there were the common people needing the Bible. More and more, the souls of earnest men were moved to give it to them in words which they could understand. At last, in England, in the fourteenth century, John Wycliffe undertook to do it. Wycliffe was a professor in the University of Oxford, and the minister of a parish in the village of Lutterworth. He was a learned man who was deeply interested in the simple people. He was deeply interested also in the politics and in the religion of his time, and he thought that they both needed to be improved. He saw that they were quite different from the religion and the politics of the Bible. These differences which were plain to him he desired to make plain to all the people by making it possible for them to read the Bible for themselves. So, out of Latin into English, he and his friends translated the whole Bible. Copies

of Wycliffe's Bible, or of portions of it, laboriously made with pen and ink—for this was before printing was invented—were handed about among the people. They read it with the eager interest of those who have at last come into possession of a great secret which they have heard of all their lives. Here was the sacred book, from which the minister read in church, and out of which he took his texts. Now any man might read it, and judge for himself whether that which he was taught was right, or not.

Not only, however, was Wycliffe's Bible made before the invention of printing, but the English of Wycliffe's time was not quite the English which we speak. The language had improved much, but it had not come into settled form. For example, in the place where our Bible says, "They were afraid, and bowed down their faces to the earth," Wycliffe's Bible says, "Thei dredden, and bowiden her semblaunt into erthe."

But those differences of which I spoke, between the life described in the Bible and the life lived by kings and nobles, and even by ministers, increased rather than diminished. And wars began to be fought between those who wished to have things changed and those who wished to have them con-

tinue as they were. At last, in the sixteenth century, in Germany, Martin Luther, who was the leader of those who were on the side of change, translated the Bible into German. It was pretty hard, Luther said, to get the Hebrew prophets to speak German; but they did it, both prophets and apostles. They spoke such good German, by the aid of Luther, that it became the German language at its best. All German books, since that, have been written in the German of Luther's Bible.

A few years later, Tindale and Coverdale persuaded the prophets and apostles to speak English. Thus the English Bible which we speak today came into existence.

William Tindale translated the New Testament, and the historical books of the Old Testament. He said, "I wish that (the Scriptures) were translated into all languages of all people. I wish that the husbandman may sing parts of them at his plough, that the weaver may warble them at his shuttle, that the traveller may with their narratives beguile the weariness of the way."

But Tindale, like Wycliffe and Luther, was of the party of those who wished to change the church. He believed that the men of the Bible hated the customs and beliefs of his time as stoutly as he

did. He wished them to speak to the people and say so. He intended his Bible to be a sword in that fight. Naturally, the men who did not agree with him, whom he was attacking, did their best to take his sword away from him. In this, they did not succeed. But they finally seized Tindale, and fastened him to a stake and burned him to death. Thus he suffered and died for giving us the great gift of the English Bible.

Miles Coverdale, who followed him in his work, translated those parts of the Bible which Tindale had not undertaken; that is, the second half of the Old Testament, from Job to Malachi. And he made some changes in Tindale's version. The result was the great Bible of 1539. The times had changed since the martyrdom of Tindale, and this Bible, the work of Tindale and Coverdale together, was published under royal approval, and ordered to be set up, for the reading of the people, in all the churches.

Thus the Bible was brought into our own language. The translation has been revised a number of times; especially in 1611, when the revision was called the King James' Bible; and again in 1881 and 1885 when scholars made what is called the Revised Version. But it is still in substance as

Tindale and Coverdale made it. The Psalms, as they are printed in the Prayer book, are still in Coverdale's words, just as he translated them. In the King James' Bible, the Lord's Prayer in St. Matthew has the words "debts," and in St. Luke the word "sins." When we say, "forgive us our trespasses," we use the words which stood in Tindale's Bible in 1525, almost a hundred years before the Bible of King James.

THE OLD TESTAMENT

THE HISTORICAL BOOKS

THE OLD TESTAMENT TRIANGLE

WE are now almost ready to enter into the Bible itself. We need, however, before we begin our study, to get some clear idea of the "lay of the land."

It is plain, in the first place, that the events which are described in the Old Testament took place in Asia and Africa. Nobody who comes into these pages lived in Europe. There is one clear mention of Greece, there are some references to islands in the Mediterranean Sea, and it is possible that the Tarshish for which Jonah set sail was some place in Spain. But the scenes of the Old Testament are in Asia and Africa, and more in Asia than in Africa. As for America, nobody in Europe, Asia or Africa had ever heard that there was any such place.

Now the two vast continents of Asia and Africa touch, as you know, at one point; though even there, since the Suez canal was cut through, they no longer actually touch. The only part of Africa which comes clearly into view in the Old Testa-

ment is the corner which is nearest Asia. And the only part of Asia which appears clearly is the corner which is nearest Africa.

Looking at these two corners within which all of the Old Testament history took place, we may observe a great triangle. One side begins at the Red Sea, near the mouths of the Nile, and comes up north-east along the shore of the Mediterranean to the sources of two great rivers, the Tigris and the Euphrates. Another side begins there, and comes down following those rivers in their course south-east till they empty into the Persian Gulf. The third side runs from the Persian Gulf, across the desert of Arabia, to the Red Sea. Most of the nations of whom we read in the Old Testament lived on the sides of this triangle.

Thus at the south-west corner, by the mouths of the Nile, lived the Egyptians; and at the south-east corner, by the mouths of the Tigris and Euphrates, lived the Chaldeans. During the greater part of Old Testament history these were the two supreme nations of the world. They were in their day what Greece and Rome later became, the conquerors of the kingdoms of the earth; except that the Egyptians and Chaldeans lived on the banks of rivers, while the Greeks and

Romans who followed them lived on peninsulas extending into the Mediterranean Sea. It was not till after the days of the Greeks and Romans that the vast oceans, the Atlantic and the Pacific, became sailing places for the navies of new nations in a new age of the world.

North of Egypt, along the western side of the triangle, was Palestine, and north of Palestine was Syria. Beside Syria, at the point of the triangle, was Mesopotamia. The name means "Between-the-Rivers," that is between the Euphrates and the Tigris. South of Mesopotamia, coming down along the eastern side, was Assyria, whose capital was Nineveh, and south of Assyria was Chaldea, whose capital was Babylon. The base line of the triangle crossed the long desert, where only wandering tribes had their habitation, but from which, in the far past, most of the peoples of the triangle had come.

In consequence of this desert, almost all communication between Egypt and Chaldea whether for war or for trade, was up one side of the triangle and down the other. And you see that, whichever way they went, the road ran through Palestine. Thus it was that Palestine, long before the Jews conquered it and settled there, felt the influence,

on one side of Egypt, and on the other side, of Chaldea.

One time, when the army of Israel fought against Jericho and took it, a soldier found among the treasures of a house whose inhabitants had fled, a "goodly Babylonish garment," and took it for his own. This garment, shining with color and rich with embroidery, had come from the eastern side of the Old Testament triangle. Perhaps some wandering merchants from Babylon, riding on camels and bringing precious things for sale, had come down the western side as far as Jericho, and there had found a purchaser.

And other things, much more important than the fine clothes of Babylon, were brought over the same long roads. One time, Jacob with Rachel his wife and many servants, and many flocks and herds, made the same journey. They started from Mesopotamia. Over they came, across the Euphrates, and down beside the Jordan. And Rachel carried with her certain images of gods. These were what we call idols. People had such images to look at when they said their prayers. So Joshua said, long after, to the people of Israel, "Your father dwelt of old time beyond the river, and they served other gods." These were

such gods as were worshipped in Assyria and Chaldea.

Thus not only Babylonish clothes but Babyonish idols were carried up one side of the triangle, land down the other. The knowledge of Babylon the laws of Babylon, the religion of Babylon, came into Palestine. Not only did the Hebrews find these influences in the country when they settled in it, but the Hebrews themselves came from a land all of whose customs were of the Babylonish kind. Some of these customs and ideas they did not like, and left behind, but others they brought with them.

WHAT ABRAHAM BROUGHT

Genesis 1–11.

1. The Creation.
   (1) First account 1:1–2:3.
   (2) Second account 2:4–25.
2. The Fall 3.
3. The Killing of Cain 4:1–15.
4. The Flood 6–9.
5. The Tower of Babel 11:1–9.

THE best of all the gifts which the country by the Euphrates made to the country by the Mediterranean was a man, a great and good man, named Abraham.

He was born and brought up near the peak of the Old Testament triangle, in Mesopotamia. There his father and his grandfather and his ancestors had lived for many generations. There he went to school, and learned the knowledge of the place and time; and there he stayed till he was a grown man. Thus when he crossed the Euphrates and became the first Hebrew—for the name Hebrew means "the-man-who-crossed"—he brought a great store of thought and experience. He knew

the ideas of the wisest men about God and the world and man.

It was as if the wisest man in our town were to go to some wild place in South America. He would carry his most valuable possessions not in his trunk but in his head. They would be his knowledge of the earth and of the stars, of science, of history, of law and government, and, most important of all, his knowledge of the nature and the will of God.

Thus came Abraham, bringing the knowledge and belief, the science and the religion, of the east, having in his mind what his parents had taught him concerning the making of the world, and the beginning of the life of man, and the origin of sin and pain.

Fortunately for us, some of these ideas were in the form of stories. The great difference between a story and a history is not that more exciting things happen in the stories than in the histories, for that is not always so; nor that the people in the histories are real, while in the stories they are only imaginary, for the heroes of some of the best stories have been real people; still less is the difference that histories are true and stories are not true, for often the story is quite as true as the

history. No, the chief difference is that in the histories we are told about the people, while in the stories we are brought into the company of the people themselves; we hear them talk. Look at the early chapters of Genesis, and you will see that they are full of conversation. There is a constant sound of voices. You hear what Adam and Eve said to one another in the Garden of Eden; even the serpent talks. God comes walking in under the trees, looking about in every direction, and calling Adam. You will not find anything like this in Gibbon's Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire, or in Macaulay's History of England.

It is fortunate that the knowledge and belief which Abraham brought were in this story form, because that makes them interesting even to boys and girls. It would have been quite different if it had been expressed in the language of science. This is another difference between truth which is put in the form of a story and truth which is put in the form of a history; the story form lasts longer. The language of science changes from century to century, but the language of the story is never outworn because it is the language of human life.

We know that these stories were brought from

the old home of the Hebrews in the east, because some of them are found there still. They had a way, in that old time, of making books of brick. They would take a soft brick and stamp into it the letters of the words and sentences, and when the brick was hard there was the writing in a lasting form. Evidently, a brick book will go unharmed through fire and water which would entirely destroy our books of paper. In the ruins of cities which were destroyed centuries ago are found brick books in which these stories were written, and the stories themselves were already centuries old when they were written thus in brick.

There are important differences, however, between the stories which are found on bricks in Nineveh or Babylon and those which we read in the first eleven chapters of Genesis. It is like painting pictures. In order to paint a picture, one must have a canvas, and a brush, and various kinds of paint; but two artists may have all this alike, and be painting the same scene, and yet make very different pictures. For the picture depends, after all, on the painter. A great painter is one to whom God has given a gift which is called genius. He knows what to do, and how to

do it, what to bring into his picture, and what to leave out.

This is like the difference between the stories which Abraham had in his memory as he learned them from his grandfather, and the stories which he told his sons. God had given Abraham a gift, like genius, which is called inspiration. It enabled him to see the difference between the false and the true, and to know more about God than was known by other men. What we have in these stories is the knowledge and belief of the ancient world, brought out of Babylonia by Abraham and other Hebrews, and retold in the light of their better faith in God.

At the heart of these accounts of the Creation, and the Fall, and the Flood, and the Tower of Babel, is the assurance of the being and the care of God. "In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth." Gradually, under His hand, the light came out of the darkness, the sun and stars appeared, the land was divided from the sea, and plants and animals and man began to grow.

Then came sin, by disobedience. Man, in order to be truly good, must have opportunity to be bad. Otherwise, his goodness is of no value. It is like

the goodness of a doll. True goodness is a free, right choice. This is the idea of the Greek story of Pandora and Epimetheus, which Hawthorne has retold in the "Paradise of Children." In that case, the opportunity to be bad was given, you remember, in the command not to open a closed box. Pandora opened the box, and all the pains and sins of the world flew out. This is the same lesson which is taught by the forbidden fruit in the Garden of Eden. It matters little what is forbidden. Something must be forbidden in order to make man's obedience of value, in order to show whether he is good because he desires to be good, or because he has no opportunity to be bad.

Then disobedience bore its natural fruit. The small sin grew like the small seed. Cain and Abel had quite different tastes and occupations. Cain was a farmer, and Abel was a shepherd. And they disagreed and quarreled; and Cain struck his brother and killed him. By-and-by the world was so bad that it seemed necessary to do with it as one does with a blackboard when all the figures go wrong; man had to be washed off the surface of the earth. Thus the Flood came.

But even after that, the race of man went wrong again. The Tower of Babel was built as a fortress

in which men might defend themselves against another Flood, and against God. So God scattered them abroad. Away they went, in the direction of the four winds, and formed separate nations, speaking different languages. The list of names in the tenth chapter of Genesis represents them.

At last, out of these many nations, a single people was selected that God might teach His truth to them particularly, and that they might teach His truth to the others. This chosen nation was the Hebrew people. And the first Hebrew was Abraham.

FROM MESOPOTAMIA TO EGYPT

Genesis 12–50.

1. Abraham
   (1) The Call 12:1–8.
   (2) The departure of Lot 13:5–18.
      a. The kings invade Sodom 14:1–24.
      b. The storm destroys Sodom 18:16–33, 19:15–26.
   (3) The dream of the flaming torch 15:1–18.
2. Isaac.
   (1) The sacrifice, 22:1–19.
   (2) The selection of Rebekah, 24.
3. Jacob.
   (1) The supplanting of Esau, 27.
   (2) The dream of the ladder and the angels, 28.
   (3) The wooing of Rachel, 29:1–30.
   (4) The meeting with Esau 32:1–33:19.
4. Joseph.
   (1) The selling of Joseph, 37.
   (2) The explaining of the dreams, 40, 41.
   (3) Joseph and his brethren, 42–45.
   (4) The settlement in Egypt, 46:1–7, 47–50.

WE have now come a little way into the first book of the Bible, and have fairly started on our journey. We are now to follow the history of the Hebrew people as one might follow the

course of a river, not stopping long in any place, now passing through a forest and now through a city, tracing the stream from the spring to the sea. And first we are to go through the remaining chapters of the book of Genesis.

Abraham, being called of God, rose up from among his neighbors, and went out to begin a new nation. He and the people with him were colonists like those who came to Jamestown in 1607, and to Plymouth in 1620. And, like the Pilgrim Fathers, what they desired was not only new lands, but freedom to worship God in their own way. It was perhaps fifteen hundred years before Christ, when the Hebrews crossed the Euphrates, and made their way down the western side of the Triangle into what is now called Palestine.

Once they stopped at a great tree, by Shechem, a vast oak, in whose mighty branches as the wind blew Abraham heard a voice like the voice of God, which told him that all that land should some day belong to his children and his children's children. They never forgot it, but even in distant countries, and in slavery, they remembered the promise and called the land the Promised Land.

Another time they stopped by a high mountain, near Bethel, and Abraham and Lot, his nephew,

climbed its heights and looked out over the land to the south. And Abraham said, "Lot, you know how many flocks and herds we have and how when we feed them and water them our herdsmen fight for the best places. Let us have no more strife. Let us settle down peacefully apart. You go your way and I will go my way. Behold the land. Which part will you take?" Now there were gray hills to the right and a green valley to the left, and Lot chose the valley. There he settled in the neighborhood of Sodom and Gomorrah, and a hard time he had of it. For the place was not so pleasant as it looked, nor were the people who lived there so good as they ought to have been in so fair a land. Once while Lot lived there, the cities were taken by enemies and the people carried away captive. And finally the cities were destroyed in a terrible rain of fire and brimstone. Lot escaped, and became the father of two great peoples who lived east of the Dead Sea, the Ammonites and the Moabites.

Presently, Abraham had two sons. The mother of Ismael, the older, was Hagar. She was servant to Sarah, Abraham's wife, who was the mother of Isaac. For in those days men often had more than one wife. But the wives quarrelled, and

Sarah sent Hagar and Ishmael away. So they went into the desert, the mother and the little boy, and there was no water to drink, and they came near dying of thirst. But God showed Hagar a spring of water. So the lad lived, and dwelt in the wilderness, and became the father of the Arabs, who were called Ismaelites; even as Lot had become the father of the Ammonites and Moabites.

After the departure of Ishmael, Abraham's only son was Isaac. His birth had been promised by an angel, and he was to be his father's heir, and Abraham and Sarah loved him dearly. But in the land from which Abraham came, and in the country where he dwelt, there was a belief that the best gift which a father and mother can give to God is one of their own children, and the way in which they gave this gift was to take the child and tie his hands and feet and lay him on a pile of wood and set the wood on fire. And it came into the heart of Abraham that he ought to do that dreadful thing. He took his little son whom he loved, his only son, and made ready to offer him in this way as a sacrifice. But at the very moment when he was standing with his knife uplifted a great voice sounded in his heart, and told him not to do

Murillo

REBECCA AT THE WELL

it. And God showed him a ram caught in a thicket, and this he sacrificed in the place of his son. Thus Abraham was taught a lesson, which men in the old time learned very slowly, that God does not desire human sacrifice. It appears again in the story of Iphigenia, where the Greeks were waiting days and days for a breeze to take their ships to Troy, till at last Agamemnon, the admiral of the fleet, was compelled to sacrifice his daughter, Iphigenia; but one of the gods took her away, and placed a doe on the altar in her stead.

When Isaac was grown to manhood, his father sent a trusted servant to find him a wife in the old country beyond the Euphrates. And the servant found Isaac's cousin Rebekah. She was drawing water at the well when the servant met her, and she went back with him and became the wife of Isaac. Then Isaac and Rebekah had two sons, Jacob and Esau. But when they became men they had a great quarrel because Jacob deceived his father in his old age and got the blessing which Isaac had intended for Esau. After that, there is little more said of Esau. As Abraham had been chosen and Lot left to be the father of the Ammonites and Moabites; and as Isaac had been chosen, and Ishmael left to be the father of the

Arabs; so now Jacob was chosen and Esau became the father of the Edomites, a tribe which lived south-east of the Dead Sea. Then the name of Jacob was changed to Israel, which means a "prince of God," and thereafter the interest is centered on the fortunes of his children and descendents, the Israelites.

Jacob fled from the anger of his brother Esau, and went beyond the Euphrates to his uncle Laban's. And on the way he dreamed a dream. And in the dream he heard the voice of God as his grandfather Abraham had heard it long before. For Abraham had dreamed that he saw a flaming torch pass between the divided pieces of a sacrifice, and that God said, "Unto thy children have I given all this land." Now Jacob dreamed, and behold a shining ladder reached from earth to heaven, and angels were climbing up and climbing down upon it, and God said, "Thy seed shall be as the dust of the earth, and thou shalt spread abroad to the west, and to the east, and to the north and to the south; and in thee and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed."

So Jacob went to his uncle Laban's, and there stayed many years. And he married his cousin Leah and his cousin Rachel. And when at last he

Murillo

JACOB'S LADDER

came back again to the Promised Land he had many sheep and many cattle. And Jacob had twelve sons. Thus he came again to Shechem, where Abraham had heard the voice of God as the wind blew in the tree. A range of mountains runs through the length of Palestine, from north to south. At the middle of the range there is a pass. The hills divide, and a green valley lies between. Along this valley one may go from the coast of the Mediterranean on the west to the bank of the Jordan on the east. On one side of the valley is Mount Ebal, and on the other side Mount Gerezim. Shechem was in this pleasant valley. There they settled, having pasture for their flocks and herds.

Of his twelve sons, Jacob liked Joseph best. But this displeased his brothers and they hated him. And one day, when they were in the fields, they seized Joseph and sold him to a caravan of Ishmaelites who were on their way to Egypt, and they told their father that a wild beast had devoured him. Joseph was carried down to Egypt, and sold as a slave to the keeper of the king's prison. And one time, in the prison, the king's butler and the king's baker dreamed strange dreams, and Joseph explained them, and the dreams came true even as

Joseph had said. So presently when Pharaoh the king had a mysterious dream which nobody could explain, he sent for Joseph. Now the dream was that seven thin and lean cows ate up seven fat cows, and again that seven thin and withered ears of corn swallowed up seven good ears. Joseph said that this meant that seven years of plenty would be followed by seven years of famine. And he ventured to advise Pharoah to gather into great storehouses the crops of the seven years of fertility, that there might be food for the seven years of dearth. This pleased the king, and he took Joseph out of the prison and set him on the throne beside him, and appointed him over this business. Thus Joseph became the ruler, next to the king, of all the land of Egypt.

Then the years of famine came, and the crops failed even in the green valley of Shechem. And the brothers of Joseph had to go down to Egypt to buy corn out of the storehouses which Joseph had built. And there was Joseph! At first, they did not know him, as he sat in state; but, after several interesting adventures, he revealed himself to them, and sent for his father Jacob to come down and live in Egypt. Back went the brothers, then, with wagons, and Jacob and all his family departed

from Shechem, left the Promised Land behind them, and took up their residence in Egypt. There they settled, with their flocks and herds, in the pleasant pastures of the province of Goshen, between the Delta of the Nile and the Isthmus of Suez.

FROM THE NILE TO MOUNT SINAI

Exodus 1–17.

1. The education of Moses.
   (1) In Egypt: Pharaoh's daughter, 2.
   (2) In Midian: The burning bush, 3.
2. The mission of Moses.
   (1) The plagues, 8–10.
   (2) The Passover, 12.
3. The passage of the Red Sea.
   (1) The east wind, 14.
   (2) The song of rejoicing, 15.
4. On the way to Sinai.
   (1) The provision of bread, 16:1–15.
   (2) The provision of water, 17:1–7.
   (3) The fight with Amalek, 17:8–16.

THEN years passed, so many that the great services of Joseph were forgotten. Jacob died, and Joseph and his brothers died, and new kings came to the throne of Egypt. But the children of Israel in the land of Goshen prospered and increased. At last, there were so many of them that the Egyptians became alarmed. "What would happen," they said, "if we should be invaded by an enemy. The Children of Israel might fight against us." For any invading enemy must come

down through that part of the country in which the Israelites lived. So they brought the Israelites into bondage. They made them slaves. Finally they made a law that every boy baby among them must be put to death.

In spite of this law, the child Moses escaped. His mother made a little boat out of a basket, and put the baby in it at a place on the river Nile where Pharaoh's daughter came to bathe. So she found the child and adopted it. Moses was brought up in the palace. But he never forgot that he was an Israelite. One day, being in the field where the Children of Israel were at work, and the Egyptians were driving them with whips to make them work faster, Moses saw an Egyptian beating an Israelite so cruelly that he went to defend him, and in the fight he killed the Egyptian. Thus it became known to the king that the sympathies of Moses were with his own people. He had to flee for his life. Away he went, across the Isthmus of Suez, into Arabia, to the land of Midian. There he stayed, and presently married a daughter of Jethro, a priest of the religion of that country.

Still he remembered his people. And one day, as he tended Jethro's flocks in the shadow of Sinai, he saw a bush mysteriously burning, and

heard in his soul the voice of God. God said that He too remembered the Children of Israel, and was ready to help them. "You must go," He said to Moses," and deliver them out of their bondage in Egypt." So Moses, with his brother Aaron, went on this mission to Egypt.

Four books—Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy—describe the life and services of Moses. He became the leader and the lawgiver of the people. First, he led them out of Egypt, over the Red Sea, and through the wilderness east, to Sinai. The account of it is in the first half of Exodus. There, at Sinai, he gave them laws. The second half of Exodus, the whole of Leviticus, the first part and the last part of Numbers, and the whole of Deuteronomy are filled with laws. Finally, leaving Sinai, he led them in the wilderness till they marched north, by the lands of Edom and Moab, to begin the conquest of Canaan. This march is described in the middle part of Numbers. We are concerned, then, with the leadership of Moses from Egypt to Mount Sinai, with the laws at Sinai, and with the leadership of Moses from Sinai to Canaan.

The first thing to do was to get the Israelites out of Egypt.

Moses and Aaron petitioned Pharaoh to let the people go that they might hold a religious festival in the wilderness. But his answer was not only a refusal but an increase of their burdens. He said that they were idle, and must be made to work harder.

Then came a series of calamities. All the afflictions to which the land of Egypt was subject came one after another, worse than had ever been known. In the midst of every plague, Moses and Aaron went to Pharaoh and said, "The Lord commands you to let His people go." And every time, the king promised; but when the plague ceased, he refused. Thus the Nile ran red like blood, and out of the discolored river came great multitudes of frogs, and the dying and decaying frogs bred flies, and the flies spread disease so that there were boils on every man and beast; and hail came, with thunder and lightning; and an east wind brought swarms of locusts, and a west wind brought sand from the desert, so that the day was as black as night, and the darkness could even be felt. At last, in every family in Egypt, the first-born died.

For this tragedy, Moses had prepared the Israelites. He told them to mark their houses. "Let every family kill a lamb, and dip a bunch of

hyssop in the blood and strike it on the lintel of the door and on the two side posts. Thus shall God see your houses and pass over them when He comes to smite the Egyptians." Afterwards, they called this the Passover, and kept a feast every year, and do so to this day, in memory of it. Pharaoh called for Moses and Aaron. "Go," he said, "worship the Lord as you have requested." And the Egyptians hastened them, giving them jewels of gold and silver, and leaving them not even time enough to bake their bread. Away they went, carrying the dough without yeast, unleavened. It was in the spring of the year, and the moon was full.

There were two roads out of Egypt. One ran to the north-east, along the shore of the Mediterranean Sea, and was called the Way of the Philistines, because it led into the Philistine country. The other ran to the south-east, across the peninsula which makes a little thumb to the great mitten of Arabia. This was called the Way of the Sea. The Israelites chose the southern route, being afraid of the Philistines. On they marched, hurrying to get out of reach of the Egyptians. When a caravan crosses the desert, a leader goes before with a long pole at the top of which is a

brazier of burning coals; and in the day, the smoke rises in a column which is seen from long distances over the level land; and in the night, the pillar of smoke is like a pillar of fire. Thus the Lord led them.

But the Way of the Sea, being one of the entrances of Egypt, was fortified. A wall crossed it, with a guard of soldiers. And as the Israelites came near the wall, the Egyptians came in sight, pursuing them. Even the last plague had not convinced them that they were contending against God. They explained it, as they had explained the others, as a natural calamity which had no connection with the Israelites. So they came, with horses and chariots and fighting men, to capture these escaping slaves. And there were the children of Israel, with the wall and the sea before them, and the pursuers coming up behind.

Then, that night, the Lord caused a great wind to blow out of the east, and it blew away the water of the shallow sea, and the Children of Israel marched over on firm ground. And in the morning, the wind changed, and the sea came back, and the Egyptians, who were following the Israelites even to the midst of the sea, were drowned. Thus the long slavery of the Israelites

came to an end, and they were out of Egypt, a free people.

The peninsula into which the Israelites thus entered is enclosed between two long and narrow gulfs of the Red Sea. The people had crossed one of these, called the Gulf of Suez, and they made their way to the other, called the Gulf of Akabah. Some think that they did this by first going down to the end of the peninsula and then going up on the other side. Some think that they went straight across the top. Thus taking a triangle to represent the peninsula, like this

A is the top of the Gulf of Suez, B is the top of the Gulf of Akabah, and C is where Mount Sinai is found by those who are of the first opinion. But D represents the location of Mount Sinai, according to those who hold the second opinion. Against finding Sinai in the lower part of the peninsula is the difficulty of understanding why the Israelites should have gone in that direction, deeper and deeper into the desolate hills. In favor of finding Sinai outside the peninsula is the fact that it is thus placed in the friendly land of Midian. Not only would they naturally go there for protection, but there it was apparently that Moses had found Sinai as he fed Jethro's flocks, and had been told

by the Lord to return thither when he should have brought the people out. Probably he led them from A to B and then to D.

Three things happened by the way. One time, there was nothing to eat, and the people were so hungry that they were sorry they had left Egypt; but God gave them manna, as if it had rained down from the sky. Another time, there was nothing to drink, and the people were so thirsty that again they wished that they had stayed in Egypt; but Moses found water for them, striking a great rock, and bringing it out. Also a wild people, the Amalekites, who roamed about the desert, attacked them, but the Israelites were victorious, fighting in the valley while Moses, with uplifted hands, prayed on the side of the hill. These incidents show how the Israelites felt themselves to be under the protection of God, who provided for their needs, and fought their battles.

THE GIVING OF THE LAW

1. Moses receives the law from God.
   (1) The Ten Commandments
      a. The Moral law, Exodus 20:1–17 Deuteronomy, 5.
      b. The Ceremonial law, Exodus 34:1–28.
   (2) The Golden Calf, Exodus 32.
2. Moses appoints judges to administer the law: Exodus 18.
3. The book of the moral law: Deuteronomy.
4. The book of the ceremonial law: Leviticus.

THUS they came, after these adventures, to the mountain toward which their journey had been directed. There in the shadow of Mount Sinai they pitched their tents, and rested at last after their long flight from Egypt. They were a great multitude of weary and frightened people. The first thing to do was to bring order out of their confusion. They must be taught to obey, for that is the very beginning of civilization, and they must be told what laws they must obey.

There was a storm raging on the top of the mountain, with lightning flashing and thunder rolling; and Moses went up into the storm to

speak with God, to learn the laws of God. But there he stayed, day after day, till the people thought that he was never coming down again, and they made Aaron their leader, and got him to make an image to which they might say their prayers; for all nations at that time had idols which they worshipped as their gods. Nowhere were any people who knelt down, as we do, and spoke to the unseen. So the Israelites wished to have an image for their god. Now they all wore golden ear-rings, the men and boys as well as the women and girls, and these they gave to Aaron, and he made a golden calf. Then, as they were praying and singing to the golden calf, down came Moses. And Moses took the calf and broke it into a thousand pieces, and threw the pieces into the river; and he told them that God is not like a calf, nor like anything else which we can see, but is the invisible Father of men.

Then, again, he went into the mountain, and when he came down, he brought the Ten Commandments with him. And Moses taught the people the laws of God. Day by day, when anybody did wrong he was brought to Moses that he might be judged, and all disputes were referred to Moses that he might settle them according to the

will of God. Thus the laws increased in number; first, the great, universal laws which Moses had learned of God; then the many little laws which Moses made to fit the great laws to the conduct of the people.

One day, Jethro came, the father-in-law of Moses, and Moses' wife came with him. And Jethro, who was now an old man, saw that Moses was trying to do more than his strength could bear, and more than there was time for in a day, and he gave him some good advice. He advised Moses to get men to help him in this matter of the law. He said that Moses might decide the great cases, but that he ought to teach other men how to deal with the little cases. And Moses followed his advice. He appointed seventy judges who took the laws of Moses and used them in their daily dealing with the people, themselves deciding most disputes but bringing the more important troubles to Moses.

So now there were three kinds of law; first, the divine law, the immediate commands of God; then the law of Moses, being the divine law as he explained and applied it; and then the law of the helpers of Moses, being the decisions of Moses extended to new cases. Thus the law grew like a

tree, with the word of God for the seed, the word of Moses for the stem, and the words of the assistants and successors of Moses for the branches. All these laws, beginning at Mount Sinai, and growing through hundreds of years, are set down in the last half of Exodus, the first and last parts of Numbers, and the whole of Leviticus and Deuteronomy.

For a long time, the laws were unwritten. People carried them in their memory. The oldest laws are probably in Exodus (20-23). They are called the Book of the Covenant. Then, probably in the time of King Josiah, the Book of Deuteronomy was written, recalling what Moses had said about right conduct; and probably in the time of the prophet Ezekiel, the Book of Leviticus was written, recalling what Moses had said about the right worship of God.

Thus Deuteronomy contains laws of conduct. It tells people to be honest and fair, to be good to the poor, to speak the truth. It says that if anybody finds a bird's nest in a tree or on the ground, with a mother bird and eggs or little ones, they must not hurt the mother bird (Deut. 22;6). And whoever builds a house, must put a battlement or fence along the edge of the roof to keep

men from falling off (Deut. 22:8). "When thou cuttest down thine harvest in thy field, and hast forgot a sheaf in the field, thou shalt not go again to fetch it; it shall be for the stranger, for the fatherless, and for the widow; that the Lord thy God may bless thee in all the work of thine hands" (Deut. 24:19).

Leviticus contains laws of worship. It describes the different kinds of sacrifice, and how they are to be offered. "He shall bring his offering of turtle doves, or of young pigeons. And the priest shall bring it unto the altar; and the blood thereof shall be wrung out at the side of the altar; and he shall pluck away his crop with his feathers, and cast it beside the altar on the east part, by the place of the ashes; and he shall cleanse it with the wings thereof, but shall not divide it asunder, and the priest shall burn it upon the altar" (Leviticus 1:14-17). You see how different are these directions about birds in Leviticus from the directions about birds in Deuteronomy.

FROM MOUNT SINAI TO THE JORDAN

1. The tabernacle and the ark, Exodus 26, 27.
2. The garments of the priests, Exodus 28.
3. The sending of the spies, Numbers 13:17–14:41.
4. The march to the Promised Land.
    (1) The King of Edom will not permit them to pass through. Numbers 20:14–21.
    (2) They conquer Sihon, King of the Ammonites, Numbers 21:21–35.
    (4) Balak, King of Moab, employs the magician, Balaam, Numbers 22–24.
5. The death of Moses.
    (1) The song of Moses, Deuteronomy 32:1–43
    (2) The blessing of Moses, Deuteronomy 33.
    (3) The burial of Moses, Deuteronomy 34.

THE Ten Commandments were inscribed on twotablets of stone and put in a chest, which they called the Ark, and the Ark was kept in a tent, called the Tabernacle, which was their church. This church they carried with them, wherever they went. Years after, when they built the Temple in Jerusalem, they made it like the Tabernacle, but in stone and gold; there was an altar

on which they burned animals which they had killed, to offer them to God; and an altar on which they sprinkled incense to make a fragrant smoke; and in the Holy of Holies, behind a curtain, was the Ark. It was then the only church in the world which contained no image of God. The Commandments were their symbol of God.

Aaron and his sons were appointed to serve at these altars and to minister in this church. Directions were given as to the garments which they were to wear. Aaron was to be dressed in a white gown fringed with blue and purple and scarlet pomegranates, like little apples, and between the pomegranates little golden bells to make a tinkling as he walked. And he had a breast plate containing twelve jewels, on which were inscribed the names of the twelve tribes of Israel. And on his head he had a turban of linen, called a mitre, and on the front of it was a band of gold tied with a blue ribbon, and bearing the words, *Holiness to the Lord.*

Now they were ready to march from Mount Sinai to the Promised Land. But first they sent out spies to see what kind of land it was, and what sort of people lived in it already. So the spies went, and journeyed up and down, and here and

there, keeping their eyes open, and brought back their report. And the report was that the land was good to live in; they showed a vast bunch of grapes which grew there, to let the people know how fertile was the soil. But they said also that the men who lived there were big and strong, like giants. "We were like grasshoppers," they said, "beside them." They added that these giants lived in great walled cities.

Then the Israelites set up a great cry of fear, and refused to go into the Promised Land. And even Moses could not pursuade them. Some, indeed, who were braver than the others, set off by themselves, against the command of Moses, and attacked some of the nearer towns of the Promised Land, but they were beaten back in hopeless defeat. Thus matters were made worse. The people had been slaves so long that they were in no condition to go to war. They were not ready for it in either mind or body. So they stayed in the wilderness. Year after year, they wandered about from place to place. They gathered flocks and herds and drove them before them. They lived an out-door life. They grew every year more strong and more brave. They learned how to be hungry and thirsty without crying. The old

people grew very old and died, and the young men who took their places were quite different from their fathers who were frightened by the report of the spies. At last, Moses saw that the time had come to leave the wandering life of the wilderness and try again to win the Promised Land.

The Promised Land is bordered on the north by the mountains of Lebanon, on the west by the Mediterranean Sea, on the south by the wilderness and on the east by the river Jordan, which flows between the Lake of Galilee and the Dead Sea. The Israelites did not try again to enter the land from the south. They determined to invade it from the east, crossing the Jordan. So they marched north. But there were two nations in their way; first, Edom, then Moab.

So they sent messengers to the king of Edom, asking permission to go through his land. They promised to keep to the highways, not to pass through field or vineyard, nor to drink any water without paying for it. But the king of Edom would not give permission, and the Israelites did not quite venture to make their way by force, so they went around, a long journey, but a safe one.

Thus they came to the domains of Sihon, king

of the Amorites, and they asked of him as they had asked of Edom consent to pass peacefully through his country, but now when Sihon refused, they attacked him and conquered him. Thus they found that they had strength and courage, and they went on with a new spirit.

As for the king of Moab, whose name was Balak, he was so frightened when he heard what had happened to King Sihon, that he sent for a mighty magician, named Balaam, to curse the army of Israel. And Balaam came and built altars on the peaks of mountains, and offered sacrifices, and listened in his soul for the word of God, but all the word was blessing, never a word of cursing. So on came Israel, and drew near to the place where they were to cross the Jordan into the Promised Land.

And Moses went up into a high mountain called Pisgah, or Nebo, whence he could look out over that fair land. He was now an old man, worn with years and with labors, and his work was done. He had redeemed his people out of Egypt, given them laws which made them a nation, and changed a multitude of slaves into a strong army. He went up and looked over into the Promised Land. And he never came down again. The people waited,

but he did not come. The farewell, and the song, and the blessing of Moses are in Deuteronomy. He had given his last counsels and said his last words. He was seen no more. And Joshua became commander in his stead.

THE CONQUEST OF THE PROMISED LAND

Joshua

1. The invasion.
    1. The crossing of the Jordan, 1–5.
    2. The siege of Jericho, 6.
    3. The siege of Ai, 7, 8.
    4. The league with Gibeon, 9.
    5. The battle of Beth-Horon, 10.
    6. The battle of Merom, 11.
2. The settlement.
    1. East of the Jordan, 13.
        —the altar of remembrance, 22.
    2. West of the Jordan 12, 14–20.
        —early account, Judges 1, 2.
        —the lot of Levi, 21.
    3. The farewell of Joshua.

BETWEEN the Hebrews and the Promised Land was the river Jordan. The water was deep and swift, and there were no bridges. Moreover, at that season of the year, the river was uncommonly wide, being swollen by the spring rains and over-flowing all its banks. The first business of Joshua, when he became commander after the death of Moses, was to find a ford. He looked for

a shallow place where the people might safely wade across.

Suddenly, while he was looking for a good wading-place, the river ceased to run. Miles away in the north it was dammed up so that it stood, as the Bible says, "in a heap." Then the command was given to march. The men who carried the ark went first and stood in the middle of the bed of the river and all the host of Israel followed them. Thus they crossed the Jordan almost as wonderfully as their fathers had crossed the Red Sea. At the Red Sea the Lord had caused a strong east wind to blow the water back. What means He made use of at the Jordan we are not told; but one time an army of Arabs crossed the Jordan on dry land, because the river was suddenly dammed by the falling of banks which a freshet had undermined.

There they stood, then, in the land which they meant to take for their own possession. But the country, as they knew very well, was already inhabited. They could not take it without fighting. So they proceeded to fight. The first town to which they came was Jericho. Already, they had sent spies into the town, and the spies came back, after various adventures, and made their report.

"The city," they said, "has walls about it, thick and high and made of stone; and every night when the sun sets, they lock the gates. But we have made friends there, especially a woman named Rahab, and her family. They are on our side. And the people are greatly afraid."

So they marched against the place. It was their first battle in the Promised Land, and they never forgot it. The story was told and retold by soldiers around camp-fires, and by fathers and mothers to their children, long before it was written in the Bible: how they marched around the city seven times on seven days, the priests going before with the ark, and blowing with their ram's-horn trumpets, the people of Jericho looking on in amazement from the top of the wall; how at last the walls fell down, and in they went straight before them; and how they killed everybody in sight, big and little, men and women, old and young.

It was a victory so wonderful that they felt that it had been gained for them by the hand of God. If Rahab helped, by opening the gates at night, they made no mention of it. Anyhow, by miracle or by stratagem, they took the town. As for the killing of the people, which seems to us so dread-

ful, and is no longer done in any war, that was the custom of the time; they knew no better.

The land of Palestine, into which the Israelites had now entered, was a little country, no bigger than New Hampshire. The whole middle part was a long range of low and broken hills, rising in the north into the high peaks of Lebanon, and falling in the south, towards Egypt, into a rolling wilderness. Many of the hills were crowned with walled towns. In these towns lived the Canaanites. They were distant cousins of the Israelites, having themselves come in from Arabia many years before. They were more civilized than the Israelites. They had substantial houses and good furniture, and books, and fine clothes, some of which they had imported from Babylon. They had cornfields and olive-yards and vineyards; and there were so many cows and bees that the hills seemed to flow with milk and honey. The people worshipped the gods of the sun and of the rain, of the corn and of the vine, to whom they prayed under the great trees and on the heights of the hills, asking for good harvests.

Between the mountains and the sea lay a wide coast, fringed with sand along the shore but spreading out into fertile plains. In one place,

where the hills came out to meet the sea, the coast was interrupted by Mount Carmel. The plain to the north of Carmel was inhabited by the Phoenicians. They had two strong cities, Tyre and Sidon. They were the race who sent their colonists along the shores of the Mediterranean, and founded the great city of Carthage, which is described in the Aeneid, and which under Hannibal became the mighty enemy of Rome. The plain to the south of Carmel was inhabited by the Philistines, from whom the whole land was called Palestine. They had five strong cities, Ekron and Ashdod, Askelon and Gath and Gaza. They soon became the strongest enemy of the Israelites.

This was the land, long and narrow; bounded on the east by the river Jordan, which ran between two lakes, the Sea of Galilee and the Dead Sea; bounded on the north by the mountains of Lebanon, and on the south by the wilderness which reached to Egypt; bounded on the west by the Mediterranean; a land whose hills and valleys were held by the Canaanites, divided into half-a-dozen little kingdoms, and whose coast plains were held by the Phoenicians and Philistines.

A road ran up straight west from Jericho into

the heart of the hills, and this the victorious invaders took, leaving the ruins of Jericho behind them. They went to attack the Canaanites.

The town of Ai they captured by stratagem. One company of soldiers hid behind the town; another company marched up the hill in front, and when the men of Ai came out against them, they ran away and the men of Ai chased them. Then rose up the hidden company and began to burn the city. Thus the men of Ai were between two enemies: the Israelites who had pretended to run away in fear turned back and the Israelites who had lain in wait ran down.

The town of Gibeon they failed to capture, by reason of another stratagem. Long before they came in sight of it they met a company of ragged men, footsore and hungry, who said, "We have come from a long distance, from over the hills and far away; make now an agreement with us." And this the Israelites did, believing what they said. For the men showed their shoes, worn with their long journey; and their bread, stale and mouldy, so long ago had it been baked. But the next day, on a neighboring hill, appeared the walls of a town, and the men of Gibeon said, "That is where we live." Nevertheless, the Israelites kept

the promise of peace which they had made. They compelled the Gibeonites to cut wood and draw water for them, but they did not put them to death.

The most important city in that part of the country was Jerusalem, and the most famous battle which Joshua fought was against five kings, of whom the king of Jerusalem was chief. These kings had joined their forces to meet the invaders and drive them out of the land. The battle was fought at the Pass of Beth-Horon. The Israelites were assisted by a tremendous hail storm, which beat in the faces of the enemy. The five kings turned and fled, and Joshua and his men pursued them through the pass. An old war-song, preserved in a collection of ballads called the Book of Jasher, says that Joshua made the sun and moon stand still that he might have light enough to see the fleeing Canaanites. "Sun," he cried, "stand thou still upon Gibeon, and thou Moon in the valley of Ajalon." Thus a poet described the greatness of their triumph: they did so much that day that it seemed like two days, the sun and moon seemed to wait for them to complete their victory.

In spite of this successful battle, the Israelites

did not take Jerusalem. It remained in possession of the Canaanites till the time of David. Thus they settled down in a land which was conquered only in part. Some cities they captured, others they were not able to capture. In some places they put the Canaanites to death or drove them out; in others, they became their neighbors, and learned their ways, both good and evil. Joshua divided Palestine among the Israelites, as William divided England among the Normans. But each tribe fought for its own section of country. The tribe of Dan, for example, found an undefended town in a fertile district by the sources of the Jordan and took it for their own. The tribes of Reuben and Gad and half of the tribe of Manasseh settled on the east of the Jordan. In the south of Palestine, the tribe of Judah was most successful; in the north, the tribe of Ephraim, one of the sons of Joseph.

THE DEFENCE OF THE PROMISED LAND

Judges, Ruth.

1. Introduction.
   The long struggle, Judges 1, 2.
2. The champions of Israel.
   (1) Othniel against the Mesopotamians 3:1–11,
   (2) Ehud against the Moabites, 3:12–31.
   (3) Deborah and Barak against the Canaanites.
      a. The story in prose, 4.
      b. The story in poetry, 5.
   (4) Gideon against the Midianites.
      a. The valor of Gideon, 6–8.
      b. The violence of Abimelech, 9.
   (5) Jephthah against the Ammonites, 10–12.
   (6) Samson against the Philistines.
      a. The lion and the bees, 14.
      b. The foxes and the fire, 15.
      c. The false Delilah, 16.
3. Appendix.
   (1) The migration of Dan, 17, 18.
   (2) The war against Benjamin, 19–21.
4. The story of Ruth, Ruth 1–4.

BETWEEN the capture of Jericho by Joshua, at the beginning of the conquest of Canaan, and the capture of Jerusalem by David, whereby the conquest was completed, was a space of a hundred

and fifty years. During this time the people were settling the land, as well as they could, and defending themselves against their enemies.

The chief of these enemies were, first the Canaanites; then, from the east, beyond the Jordan, the Midianites and the Ammonites; then finally, from the west, beside the Mediterranean, the Philistines.

In spite of the victories of Joshua, the Canaanites got the better of the men of Israel. Especially in the northern part of the country they were so strong that the Israelites did not dare to show themselves along the public roads. The Canaanites had nine hundred chariots of iron; the Israelites had neither shield nor spear. The conquest of the Promised Land seemed to have failed, and the people seemed likely to become slaves to the Canaanites as they had been slaves to the Egyptians. Then arose a wise woman named Deborah, full of the grace of God, and she called a brave man named Barak, and the two sent messages to the oppressed tribes, calling for men to fight.

Now, in the midst of the land was a great plain. It began at Mount Carmel, where the hills touched the sea, and extended across the country to the

Jordan. It was a wide and level place, and through it flowed the river Kishon. In the plain, on the west, stood the ancient fortress of Megiddo; there the Canaanites met, under Sisera their general, to punish the revolt of the Israelites. By the plain, on the east, was Mount Tabor, where Barak gathered his ill-armed followers. Out marched Sisera from Megiddo, with his nine hundred chariots of iron; down rushed Barak along the slopes of Tabor. And again, as at the battle of Beth-Horon, there was a mighty storm. The rain fell in torrents. The plain became a marsh, the river suddenly arose, and overflowed its banks. The Canaanites fled in dismay, and the Israelites pursued them. Sisera took refuge in the tent of a woman named Jael, and while he slept for weariness she drove a nail of the tent into his head and killed him.

This decisive victory made the men of Israel masters of the men of Canaan. But there were enemies across the Jordan.

First came the Midianites, out of the desert. Year after year, when the corn and the grapes were growing in the fields which the Israelites had planted, these wild people came riding in over the shallow river and carried away the harvest. Some

of the men of Israel they killed, and the others they left without either food or cattle. Back they went into the wilderness, driving the oxen and the sheep before them.

Against these robbers, the Lord raised up Gideon, whose brothers they had killed. Gideon called the men of Israel to battle, and a great company came, mostly farmers from the fields. Out of these he chose three hundred. To each man he gave a torch and a pitcher and a trumpet. So they came upon the Midianites in the dark, when they were all asleep. And when Gideon gave the signal, they broke their pitchers, waved their flaming torches in the air, and blew upon their trumpets. And they shouted, "The sword of the Lord and of Gideon." Then the Midianites were so frightened that they ran away. Down they fled on their camels along the valley and over the Jordan, and they never came back again.

The people were so grateful to Gideon that they made him their king, and they agreed that his son should be king after him. But they who made this agreement were not many. The land was so full of hills and valleys that the Israelites were divided, like the Canaanites before them. Each

tribe made its own laws, and fought its own battles, and had little to do with its neighbors. The whole kingdom of Gideon was only about twenty-five miles from north to south, and the same distance from east to west. Moreover, the son of Gideon, Abimelech, was so bad a king that the people were sorry that they had made him ruler over them. He began his reign by killing his seventy brothers; the town of Shechem rebelled against him; finally, beside the wall of Thebez, a town which he was attacking, a woman threw down a mill-stone upon him from the tower, and killed him.

Then came the Ammonites. They attacked the tribes of Israel who had settled east of the Jordan. Now there was a famous outlaw in that part of the country, named Jephthah, who had with him a band of stout men, and as the peril from the Ammonites increased the people offered to make Jephthah their king if he would rid them of their enemies. This Jephthah did, fighting a great battle with the Ammonites and defeating them. But, on the eve of the battle, Jephthah made a vow that if he were successful in the contest he would offer as a sacrifice to God the first living creature that should meet him on his vic-

torious return. And the first living creature to meet him was his own daughter!

After that, the Israelites fell to fighting among themselves. The Ephraimites,—the men west of the Jordan,—said to the Gileadites,—the men east of the Jordan,—"Why did you not take us with you in the war against the Ammonites?" Thus they began to quarrel. The Gileadites took every Ephraimite whom they could catch on their side of the Jordan, and put him to death. And when they were in doubt whether the man belonged to Ephraim or not, they said, "Say Shibboleth"; and if the man said "*Sib*boleth," they killed him.

All these divisions made the Israelites weak in the presence of their enemies, and especially in the presence of their strongest enemies, the Philistines. The Midianites had attacked the northern tribes; the Ammonites had attacked the eastern tribes; the Philistines attacked the southern tribes. They came up from their wide fields and strong cities by the sea, and the Israelites were afraid of them. There was one strong man, however, who was not afraid of the Philistines. His name was Samson. Samson was not the leader of an army, like Barak and Gideon and Jephthah. He was an adventurer,

who fought not to deliver his people but because he loved to fight.

One time, when he married a Philistine woman, he told a riddle at the wedding. If the thirty young men who came to the wedding could guess the riddle, Samson was to give them thirty shirts and thirty coats. They did guess it, having learned the answer from the bride, and Samson went off and killed thirty Philistines, and took their shirts and coats to pay his forfeit.

Another time, when he was angry with the Philistines, he caught three hundred foxes and tied their tails together, two by two, and fastened flaming torches to the tails, and sent them into the Philistines' wheat and burned it down.

Another story was that he went into a walled town, and when the gates were locked, the Philistines said, "Now we have him fast; we will kill him in the morning." But in the middle of the night, Samson rose up and carried off the gates on his back.

Finally, however, a woman named Delilah betrayed him to the Philistines. She begged him to tell her the secret of his great strength; and he told her that if his hair were cut he would be like any other man. So when he was asleep, she cut

his long hair, and the Philistines rushed in and bound him, and put out his eyes.

But one day, when his hair had grown again, he was brought into a Philistine temple which was filled with the leaders and soldiers of his enemies; and suddenly he put forth his hand and broke the pillars which held up the roof. Down fell the building, and Samson and the Philistines died together.

The victories of Barak over the Canaanites, of Gideon over the Midianites, of Jephthah over the Ammonites, and of Samson over the Philistines, are recorded in the book of Judges. The story of Ruth shows that the days were not entirely filled with fighting. There had been trouble between the Israelites in the south and their neighbors across the Jordan, the Moabites. And Ehud, a left-handed man of the tribe of Benjamin had gone over and killed Eglon, the king of Moab. But peace followed, and there was friendship, and even marriage, between the two peoples.

Ruth, a young woman of Moab, had been married to a son of Naomi who came from Bethlehem. The young man died, and when Naomi returned to Bethlehem, Ruth came with her. There she lived with her mother-in-law, and helped in the

work of the household, going out into the fields and gathering the wheat which the gleaners dropped from their sheaves. And Boaz, the owner of the field, saw her, and told his men to be good to her and drop some handfuls for her to gather up. And at last, he married her. And the son of Ruth and Boaz was named Obed, and Obed's son was Jesse, and one of Jesse's sons was David.

THE SELECTION OF SAUL

I Samuel 1–15, 28–31.

1. The judgeship of Eli.
    1. Eli and Hannah, 1.
    2. Eli and his sons, 2.
    3. Eli and the word of God, 3.
    4. The capture of the ark, 4–7.
2. The judgeship of Samuel.
    1. Samuel as leader, 8, 12.
    2. Samuel as seer, 9, 10:1–17.
    3. The appointment of Saul 9:18–27.
3. The reign of Saul.
    1. The war with the Ammonites.
        The relief of Jabesh, 11.
    2. The war with the Philistines.
        The battle of Michmash, 13, 14.
    3. The war with the Amalekites.
        Obedience and sacrifice, 15.
    4. The Philistine victory at Mt. Gilboa, 28–31.

YEAR by year, the Philistines grew stronger than the Israelites; because the Philistines were a united people, living on the sea-coast plain, while the Israelites, separated by their hills and valleys, were divided. At last, in the days of Eli, the Israelites were in such a desperate condition that

they tried to gain a victory by bringing into the battle the ark of God. This ancient chest, containing the slabs of stone on which the Ten Commandments were engraved, had been carried around Jericho, they said, till the walls fell down. Perhaps, if it were taken into the camp, the Philistines might run away. But unfortunately, the Philistines fought harder than ever, and not only defeated the Israelties but captured the ark.

When the news came to Eli, he fell back off the bench on which he sat, and the shock and the fall killed him, being an old man. And the ark was carried off to the Philistines' country and put in the temple of their god, Dagon. The next morning the statue of the god was found upon the floor beside the ark, and a plague broke out in the city. The ark was carried to another city, and the plague followed it. At last, the Philistines put the ark on a cart and harnessed two cows to draw it, and they carried it back to the land of Israel. But the troubles of the Israelites continued, till it became plain to all wise men that it was necessary to get the tribes together. They must be united in order to defend themselves against the united Philistines.

The wisest man in the country was named

Samuel. He had been brought up by Eli, in the temple from which the ark had been taken into the battle. He was now an old man, having been for many years a leader and adviser of the people. One day there came to see him a youth named Saul. The asses on Saul's father's farm had run away, and Saul was looking for them. He went to ask Samuel where to find them. Then Samuel said, "Saul, you are the man for whom I have been waiting. The Lord has spoken in my soul and told me that you shall be the King of Israel." And he anointed him with oil. Thus Saul was chosen to be king, and to unite the forces of divided Israel.

Then one day, when Saul came in from his plowing, he found a great excitement among the people. News had come that the Ammonites had laid seige to the town of Jabesh, across the Jordan, and had sworn either to kill all of the inhabitants or to put out all of their right eyes. Immediately Saul summoned the soldiers of Israel, and over they went, and drove away the Ammonites and saved the town. Thus the Israelites knew that the Lord had sent them a leader, and they made Saul their king, as Samuel advised them.

When the Philistines heard that the Israelites

had chosen a king, they came up against them. But the Isrealites would not fight. They ran away and hid themselves, as they had done before. Only a few hundred men remained with Saul. So the Philistines scattered their soldiers about the land and began to plunder the people. But at Michmash, they had a fortress and a garrison.

One day Saul's son, Jonathan, determined to attack the Philistine garrison alone. He climbed up the steep cliff, with only his armor-bearer with him, and appeared suddenly in the Philistine camp and rushed upon the Philistines with his sword, and they were thrown into a panic. One ran upon another. At last they all began to run, and Saul and his soldiers came across the ravine and chased them, and they pursued them in a great rout down the Pass of Beth-horon, where Joshua had chased the Canaanites.

Now Saul, like Jephthah, had made a vow. He had resolved to sacrifice to God whomsoever should taste food that day until the sun went down. And Jonathan, who knew nothing of his father's vow, had tasted some honey. Saul was ready to sacrifice his son as Jephthah had sacrificed his daughter. But the people would not let

him. They began to see that such an act could not be according to the will of God.

By the victory at Michmash, the people of Israel were delivered from the power of the Philistines for several years. Saul had time to take an army down into the southern wilderness and fight the Amalekites, wild people who kept attacking the settlers of Canaan as the Indians kept attacking the settlers of Virginia and Massachusetts. He defeated the Amalekites, and captured their king, Agag; but he lost the friendship of Samuel. For Samuel told Saul that the Lord desired him to spare neither man nor beast among the Amalekites; and Saul disobeyed, sparing sheep for a great sacrifice, and Agag to grace his triumph. Samuel reproved Saul, saying that the Lord cares more for obedience than for sacrifice.

Then the Philistines gathered another army. They marshalled their soldiers in the great plain where Sisera had gathered his forces against Barak. Saul and his soldiers were on Mount Gilboa. Samuel was now dead, and Saul had no one to advise him. All his warriors were afraid. In his despair, Saul went to a witch at Endor, and asked her to call up Samuel from the dead to speak with him, but he got no satisfaction. So the battle

came, and the men of Israel fled away. And Saul and Jonathan, who stood their ground, were killed. Thus the Philistines were masters again over the land, and the king was dead.

The Philistines stripped off the armor of Saul and put it in one of their temples. His body they fastened to the wall of the city of Beth-Shan. But when the men of Jabesh heard of it, they arose and went all night, and took Saul's body from the wall, and carried it back to their own town and buried it. Thus they showed their gratitude to him who saved their lives and their right eyes.

THE EXPLOITS OF DAVID

I Samuel 16–27, II Samuel

1. David in the court of Saul.
   - (1) As minstrel, I Samuel, 16.
   - (2) As champion, 17.
   - (3) Jonathan's friendship, Saul's jealousy, 18–20.
2. David as outlaw.
   - (1) The adventure of the sheepmaster, 25.
   - (2) The adventure of the king's spear, 26.
3. David as king (1000 B. C.)
   - (1) Successes.
     - *a.* The defeat of the house of Saul, II Samuel 1–4, 9.
     - *b.* The establishment of the house of David.
       - (a) The taking of Jerusalem, 5:1–11.
       - (b) The defeat of the Philistines, 5:17–25.
       - (c) The bringing-up of the ark, 6.
       - (d) The war with the Ammonites, 10.
   - (2) Failures
     - *a.* The sin of Bathsheba, 11, 12.
     - *b.* The conspiracy of Absolom, 14–19.
     - *c.* The revolt of Sheba, 20.
     - *d.* The famine of the Gibeonites, 21:1–14.
     - *e.* The famine of the census, 24.

WHEN Saul and Jonathan fell down slain on Mount Gilboa, the sorrow of the people was expressed in a hymn of lamentation which was written and sung by David. Nobody knew better how to make poetry in praise of soldiers; for David was both a soldier and a poet.

There are two accounts of the first appearance of David at the court of Saul. One describes him as a youth who knew how to play upon the harp. The other describes him as a youth whose arm was strong, and his courage high, to fight.

King Saul had a disease of the mind. Whenever it came upon him, he would be like a crazy man. Sometimes he would be silent, saying not a word, and looking very sad. Sometimes he would be angry, catching up his spear and throwing it at anybody who might be in the way. The only medicine which did him any good was music. When they heard, then, that Jesse's son David was a good player on the harp they sent for him, and he played to the king.

One time, in the war which was always going on with the Philistines, the two armies were set in array, and out of the Philistine army came a giant named Goliath, who dared the Israelites to come out and fight with him. But they were all afraid.

Then came David on an errand into the camp, and when he saw the giant he got Saul's permission to go out to meet him. And as he went, he picked up some smooth stones, and when he came near, before the giant could use his sword, he hit him with a stone, throwing it with a sling. And that was the end of the giant, for the stone struck him in the forehead.

The victory over the giant made David a hero among the people. Whenever they saw him, they shouted. And the king honored him, and he married the king's daughter, the princess Michal. But Saul's disease grew worse, and he became jealous of David, and hated him. Once he even sent men to kill David, and David had to climb down out of a window, and barely escaped with his life.

So David became an outlaw, like Robin Hood. In the cave of Adullam he gathered a band of men together, and they fought with the Amalekites and other enemies. These wild people used to ride in on camels, like the Midianites, and drive away the farmers' cattle. David protected the farmers, and they paid him for his services. Thus he earned his living. Saul still pursued him.

One time when Saul and his men were in the

valley, and David and his men were hidden in the hills, David went over by night into Saul's camp, and came to where Saul slept, and took away his spear. Then he called to the king from the side of the hill, and when the king found that David had spared his life, he was sorry for all his hatred against him. But that was only for the moment; he pursued him still, till David sought refuge among the Philistines. There he was when the Philistines killed Saul at Mount Gilboa. David tried to get into the battle, hoping to throw the army of the Philistines into confusion, and save Saul; but the Philistines kept him away. On the day of the great battle, he was fighting the Amalekites.

The first king of Israel was dead: who should be the second? Jonathan, Saul's son, had fallen beside his father, and two of his brothers with him. There remained a fourth son, called Ish-bosheth. But the men of Judah wished to have David for their king. So there was a war for the crown. Ish-bosheth had Abner for his general; David had Joab.

The armies met by the pool of Gibeon. At first they tried to decide the battle by sending out twelve men on each side to fight; but all the

twenty-four champions were killed, not one remained. So the battle was joined, and the army of Ish-bosheth was defeated. Presently, Abner and Ish-bosheth quarrelled, and Abner deserted to the side of David. Then Joab by treachery killed him. Shortly after, Ish-bosheth was murdered in his bed by two of his officers, and thus the cause of the house of Saul was lost. David became king.

By three notable acts David strengthened his throne: he delivered the people from the Philistines, he captured Jerusalem and made it his capital city, and into Jerusalem he brought the ark of God.

The Philistines, who had killed the first king of Israel on Mount Gilboa, immediately gathered their soldiers when they heard that there was a new king in his place. But David's adventures as an outlaw had taught him many things about the art of war, and the men who had been his companions were brave men. One of them had a duel with an Egyptian giant, and pulled the giant's spear out of his hand and ran him through with it; also he fought a lion in a pit on a snowy day. Three others, hearing David wish for a drink of water from the well by the gate of Bethlehem, made

their way through the army of the Philistines and brought it to him. Such as these were his captains. So when the Philistines came up against David to fight the battle of the valley of Rephaim, the charge of the army of Israel was like the breaking of a dam across a strong river; they carried everything before them. Thus at last the land had rest from the Philistines.

In spite of all the wars, the city of Jerusalem, which was even then an ancient and famous fortress, was still in the hands of the men of Canaan, the Jebusites. It stood so securely on a steep hill that the Jebusites boasted that even the lame and blind among them could hold it against any enemy. But David's men climbed up along the water course, and took the place by surprise, and smote the blind and the lame and captured it. The city stood between the northern and the southern tribes, as Washington stands between the northern and the southern states. David built his palace in Jerusalem. At last, after their long wandering and fighting, each tribe making it own way and living its own life, the Israelites had a strong central city.

David made Jerusalem the centre not only of national law but of national religion. He sent for

the ark, which was still where the Philistines cows had left it after the plague in the Philistine cities. There was a great procession of priests and soldiers, with much shouting and blare of trumpets, and offering of sacrifices; and at last the ark, still safely holding the ten commandments, was set down, after its long wandering, beside the palace of the king, on the Jerusalem hill.

A grievous famine which afflicted the people was explained by the Gibeonites as a punishment of God because Saul had broken the ancient promise made by Joshua; for Saul had attacked the Gibeonites and tried to destroy them. So David seized two sons of Saul and five grandsons and hanged them, all the seven together, and forbade anybody to take them down. Thus he thought to please God and stop the famine, for David like the wisest of his people, was still ignorant in many ways concerning God, and concerning the world in which we live. But Rizpah, the mother of Saul's sons, stood night and day beside their bodies, keeping birds and beasts away, till the king took them down and buried them.

David was now strong enough not only to defend the people against the Philistines, their old enemies in the west, but to go to war with their old enemies

in the east. Of these, the most troublesome were the Ammonites, who had recovered from their defeat at the hands of Jephthah and of Saul. At first, David sent messengers of friendship, but the Ammonites derided them, shaving their beards in half and cutting off their long robes, so that they were ashamed to be seen. Then the Ammonites called the Arameans to help them against the army which David sent, under Joab and Abishai, to punish them. Joab attacked the Ammonites and put them to flight, and Abishai did the same to the Arameans. Finally, David came himself and destroyed the capital city of the Ammonites, and brought away their king's crown, heavy with gold and having a precious jewel in it: this he put on his own head.

It was during this war that David committed a great crime. He saw in Jerusalem a woman named Bathsheba, who pleased him greatly; but she had a husband who was a soldier in the king's army. And David told Joab to put Bathsheba's husband in the front rank of the battle. There he was killed by the Ammonites and David took Bathsheba for his wife. There was a brave prophet named Nathan who rebuked the king. He told him plainly that he had broken two of the great

laws of God: he had committed adultery and murder. Nathan made David see the dreadfulness of his sin, and he was very sorry. The happiness of his splendid life was gone.

For two of David's sons quarreled, and one of them killed the other. And presently Absolom, the son who killed his brother, conspired against his father. Absolom probably knew that David intended to make Bathsheba's son, Solomon, king in his place, and he tried to become king himself. He gathered men together and marched with so strong a force against Jerusalem that David fled before him. With a few faithful followers the king fled over the Jordan. But one of the counsellors of Absolom was a secret friend of David, and he persuaded Absolom to wait and not attack the king in the disadvantage of his weakness. So David was able to assemble men about him. Then there was a battle, Absolom leading one side and David's general, Joab, leading the other. And Joab found Absolom in the woods, among the thick trees, caught fast, and he killed him. So the war was over, but the death of his son was a bitter sorrow to the king.

At last, in his old age, another son, Adonijah, tried to get the crown from Solomon. Adonijah made many friends, and invited them to a great

dinner, and there they hailed him as the king. They cried "Long live the King!" But the news came to David, and immediately he set Solomon upon his throne. So that conspiracy failed. Then David died, and Solomon reigned in his stead.

THE GLORY OF SOLOMON

I Kings 1–11.

1. The conspiracy of Adonijah 1, 2.
2. The wisdom of Solomon 3:2–28, 4:29–34.
3. The splendor of Solomon.
    (1) The court, 4.
    (2) The temple.
        a. The building, 6.
        b. The dedication, 8.
    (3) The palace, 7.
    (4) The visit of the Queen of Sheba, 10.
4. The troubles of Solomon, 11.
    (1) The idols of the foreign wives.
    (2) Hadad of Edom and Rezin of Damascus.
    (3) Jeroboam, the overseer.

ONE night King Solomon had a dream, and in the dream he was told that he might have whatever he wished, and he wished to be wise. The dream came true, and Solomon was the wisest of men. Thus his power and his wealth and his kingdom increased.

One time two women came to Solomon bringing one baby. One mother said, "The baby is mine"; the other mother said, "The baby is mine." And Solomon said, "Let the child be cut in two, and

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THE JUDGMENT OF SOLOMON

give half to one mother and half to the other." Then the true mother cried out, "No! let her have it rather than kill it." So the wise king knew to which of the women the child belonged.

Solomon put Adonijah to death, who had conspired to take the throne; and Joab also, the great general of David, who had taken Adonijah's part. He gathered about him a multitude of courtiers, so many that every day they ate so much bread that there was need of six hundred bushels of fine flour and twelve hundred bushels of meal to make it, and so much meat that they killed ten fat oxen and twenty meadow-fed oxen, and a hundred sheep, and nobody knows how many fatted fowls. These provisions were supplied by the people. Solomon divided the land into twelve parts, and each part was responsible for the food of the court for one month.

Not only did the people bring to Solomon day by day their wheat and their cattle, but they worked for him, cutting down great cedar trees in the forests of Lebanon, getting out blocks of stone from the quarries, and sailing ships on the Red Sea. The ships went to the lands of the far east and came back with gold, and red sandal-wood, and precious stones, and ivory and apes and pea-

cocks; thus Solomon grew very rich. The blocks of stone and the cedar trees he used in making splendid buildings,—a palace and a temple.

The temple of Solomon was one of the most famous buildings of the ancient world. Outside, before the door, was a great altar cut in the rock of the hill; here were offered sacrifices of sheep and oxen. Beside this altar was a vast bowl of brass which held sixteen thousand gallons of water; and there were ten smaller bowls in which the water was carried about that the priests might wash their hands. The entrance to the porch of the temple was between two lofty brazen pillars. The temple had two rooms, the outer room, called the Holy Place, contained a table on which were laid twelve loaves of bread, one for each of the tribes of Israel; and beside the table was a candlestick with seven branches. The inner room, called the Holy of Holies, contained two winged figures, each of them almost three times as tall as a man, and between the two, under their outstretched wings, was the ark of God. The walls of the temple were of massive stone, lined with cedar. The men who superintended the cutting of the stone and the placing of the cedar were Phoenicians, sent to David by Hiram, king of Tyre.

Besides the temple was the palace. One of the rooms had so many cedar pillars that it was called the House of the Forest of Lebanon. In another room stood the king's throne, made of gold and ivory, with two carved lions beside it, and twelve lions on the steps which led to it. Solomon's guard had shields of gold, and all the cups on Solomon's table were of pure gold.

But as the wealth of Solomon increased, he ceased to be as wise as he was at the beginning. He married many foreign wives, as was the way with kings in those days, in order to ally himself in friendship with foreign lands. And each wife brought her religion with her, and the king built shrines for all these foreign gods; for Chemosh, the god of Moab, and for Milcom, the god of Ammon, and for Astarte, the goddess of Sidon. He forgot the word of the Lord who said, "Thou shalt have no other gods but me."

Then enemies arose against the king. The Edomites and the Midianites and the Arameans of Damascus troubled him. But his chief enemy was one of his own officers. Jeroboam, a man of the tribe of Ephraim, was in charge of the men of his own tribe who were building the king's palace. And the men rebelled against the king. They

protested against the government of Solomon which was altogether for his own glory and not for the good of the people, and against their own hard labor and poor pay. Jeroboam was their leader.

One day, as Jeroboam was in the field, clad in a new cloak, the prophet Abijah met him, and Abijah took the cloak of Jeroboam and tore it into twelve pieces, and ten of the pieces he gave to Jeroboam, saying, "The Lord shalt take the kingdom out of the hand of Solomon, and of the twelve tribes you shall have ten." This Solomon heard, and Jeroboam had to flee for his life to Egypt.

Thus the last days of Solomon were days of trouble. He made for himself a great name and a mighty kingdom, he gathered riches about him and lived splendidly; but he oppressed his people and they hated him. Then he died, and his son Rehoboam reigned in his stead.

THE REVOLUTION

I Kings 12–14

1. The revolt of the ten tribes, 12:1–24.
2. The Kingdom of Israel: Jeroboam (937–915)
   (1) The golden calves, 12:25–33.
   (2) The altar in Bethel, 13.
   (3) The curse of Abijah, 14:1–20.
3. The kingdom of Judah: Rehoboam (937–920)
   The invasion of Shishak 14:21–31.

With the division of the Hebrew kingdom, we begin to come upon definite dates. Up to that time the common custom of all nations was to reckon from the first year of each reigning king. In the eighth century, however, the Greeks took the year which we now call 776 B. C. and called it the Frst Olympiad; i. e. the date of the first Olympic games. The Romans took 753 B. C. and called it the year of the Foundation of the City; i. e. the date of the founding of Rome by Romulus. Assyrian calendars have been discovered containing records of two hundred and fifty years; in one of these years was a total eclipse of the sun which has been calculated as occurring in 763. By this, all these years are dated. Thus we learn that the Assyrians had dealings with Ahab, king of Israel, in 854, and with Jehu, king of Israel, in 842. Sargon destroyed Samaria in 722. Sennacherib besieged Jerusalem in 701.

REHOBOAM, the new king, had none of the wisdom of his father. He went to meet the assembled tribes at Shechem that they might accept him as their ruler, according to the custom. Thus Saul had become king, and then David, and then Solomon, amidst the shouts of the people. But the people waited until Rehoboam should tell them what kind of a king he meant to be. They said, "Your father was very hard upon us; his yoke was heavier than we could bear, he made us labor much and paid us little. What do you propose to do?"

Then Rehoboam consulted first with the older men, who had been his father's friends, but who had known his father's faults, and they advised him to give back to the people their old rights and liberties. After that, he consulted with the younger men, and they very foolishly advised him, in their ignorance, to follow Solomon's example. And Rehoboam took the counsel of the younger men. He answered the people saying, "My father made your yoke heavy; I will make it heavier. He chastised you with whips; I will chastise you with scourges."

Then there was a great cry, but nobody shouted "God save the king." Instead of that, the word

was "To your tents, O Israel." And, even as Abijah had predicted, ten tribes refused to have the son of Solomon for king. There was left to Rehoboam only the tribe of Judah, and the little tribe of Benjamin. Thus the Israelites were divided and became two kingdoms.

Rehoboam fled to Jerusalem, and there reigned over the kingdom of Judah. Not only had he lost the larger and better part of the lands of his father, but the Egyptians came up and plundered him, and carried away the golden shields of Solomon. Rehoboam put brass ones in their places.

As for the northern tribes, they called Jeroboam to be ruler over the kingdom of Israel. He made Shechem his capital and in order to keep his people from going to Jerusalem to worship God, he set up golden calves or bulls, like the winged figures in the Holy of Holies, one at Bethel in the south of his country, the other at Dan in the north. Thus the two kingdoms were divided not only in government but in religion.

To the men of Judah, the men of Israel seemed to have rebelled both against the house of David and the church of God.

It was reported in Jerusalem that a man of God from Judah rebuked King Jeroboam at his altar

in Bethel, and that when the king put forth his hand to seize the prophet, his arm was paralyzed, and the altar was broken.

It was reported also that when Jeroboam's son fell sick, the queen went to beg prayers of the old prophet Abijah, the same who had torn the cloak of Jeroboam. She went in disguise, but Abijah knew her, and as he had blessed Jeroboam in the old days so now he cursed him with a bitter curse. The child, he said, should die, and all the descendants of Jeroboam should come to evil ends; dogs should eat their dead bodies in the city, and birds in the field.

Nothing was too bad to be believed concerning Jeroboam in Jerusalem.

Nevertheless, Jeroboam reigned well over the northern kingdom for twenty years. By far the greater part of the empire of Saul and David and Solomon was under his rule. The land was fertile in the sunny valleys. The ancient highways between Egypt and Assyria lay across it, and brought the people into relation with the trade of the world; and they increased in wealth and power.

The southern kingdom had two advantages over the northern. One was the possession of the ancient capital, Jerusalem; the other was the

peaceful descent of the crown from father to son, in the line of the family of David. The northern kingdom, having its beginning in a revolution, suffered from a series of revolutions. Jeroboam's son, after a reign of two years, was killed by Baasha. Baasha's son was killed by Zimri, the commander of his chariots. Zimri, after a reign of seven days, was beseiged by Omri, commander of the army, and burned in the ruins of his palace. Omri is remembered for the wisdom with which he chose a new capital for the kingdom of Israel, building on a hill the strong city of Samaria. After him came Ahab.

ELIJAH AND ELISHA

I Kings 15–II Kings 9

1. The ministry of Elijah.
   (1) The dry brook and the cruse of oil, I Kings, 17.
   (2) The prophet of the Lord and Baal's prophets, 18.
   (3) The still small voice, 19.
   (4) Naboth's vineyard, 21.
   (5) The prophet and the captains, II Kings 1.
   (6) The chariot of fire, 2.
2. The ministry of Elisha.
   (1) The conquest of Moab, 3.
   (2) The woman of Shunem, 4.
   (3) The leprosy of Naaman, 5.
   (4) The seige of Samaria, 6, 7.
   (5) Elisha sends Hazael to kill the King of Damascus, 8:7–15.
   (6) Elisha sends Jehu to kill the King of Israel, 9.

AHAB greatly strengthened the northern kingdom by making friends with three importantneighbors: with the Syrians of Damascus in the east, with the kingdom of Judah in the south, and with the Phoenicians of Tyre and Sidon in the west.

He had inherited from his father Omri a war with the people of Damascus. The king of that city, Benhadad, was so strong and confident that he sent word to Ahab that he was coming to Samaria to carry away all the gold and silver, and whatever else he liked. But Ahab went out to meet him, and drove him back. This he did twice. The second time Ahab not only defeated the army of Damascus, but captured the king, Benhadad. Having him thus in his power he made him promise to give up certain cities which he had taken from Israel, and not to fight against Israel any more. Thus he made peace with Damascus, and opened the great roads of travel and trade toward the east.

War had been going on with the kingdom of Judah most of the time since the Revolution. But Ahab made peace with Jerusalem by giving his daughter, Athaliah, in marriage to the king of Judah, Jehoram.

Ahab himself married Jezebel, the daughter of the king of Tyre. Thus he made peace with the Phoenicians, and opened the great roads of trade and travel toward the west.

By these alliances Ahab became a great king. The people prospered and grew rich. They built

cities, filled with fine houses. They sent out caravans laden with wheat, and caravans came in from Damascus and from Tyre and from Jerusalem bringing precious things for sale. It seemed as if the golden days of Solomon had returned.

But Ahab repeated not only the splendors but the sins of Solomon. One bad thing which he did was to oppress his people, making himself rich at their expense. Another bad thing was to build beside the altar of the Lord a temple to Baal, the god of the Phoenicians. These sins were suggested by Jezebel, his wife. She wished him to be the kind of king in Samaria which her father was in Tyre. And she brought her own religion with her. The temple of Baal was great and splendid, and hundreds of priests ministered in it. As for the priests of the Lord, Jezebel hated them, and tried to drive them out of the land.

The man who saved the liberty of Israel from the tyranny of Ahab, and the religion of Israel from the idolatry of Jezebel, was Elijah. Elijah was a prophet from the desert. His hair and beard were long and flowing, and his cloak was the skin of a camel, and he had a long staff in his hand.

Ahab wished to have more ground for his garden by the palace in Samaria, but the place

which he desired was owned by a man named Naboth, who had a vineyard there, and he would not sell it, even to the king. Then Jezebel got men to bear false witness against Naboth, saying that he had broken some of the laws; and Naboth was arrested and tried and condemned, and stoned to death. "Now," said Jezebel to Ahab, "you may take the vineyard. Naboth is dead." But Elijah went to meet Ahab, and found him in the vineyard, and he called the curse of God upon him because he had done that thing. He made him see that God is against all such robbery and murder, and that He must be obeyed even by the greatest kings.

One time there was a famine in the land, the ground was dry, and nothing would grow in the fields. And the people prayed to Baal to help them. They felt that Baal was really the god of the land, and could make the rain fall and the sun shine as he pleased, and that their own Lord God was not so mighty. They had not yet come to know that there is one God over all the earth and sky. At last, the king called a great assembly on Mount Carmel to pray for rain; and the priests of Baal were there, four hundred and fifty of them, but on the Lord's side was Elijah only. So

they prayed; first the priests of Baal, crying aloud and cutting themselves with knives, but getting no reply; and then Elijah. The story of Elijah's prayer became one of the famous memories of Israel. Men said that as he prayed the lightning began to flash, and the thunder began to roll, and the sky became black with clouds. And the people cried, "The Lord, he is the God! The Lord, he is the God!" And the rain fell.

All this, however, made no difference with Jezebel. She sought to kill Elijah, so that he had to flee for his life. Away he went into the wilderness of the south, in deep despair, and sitting down under a juniper tree he desired to die, feeling that he was of no use in the world. Thence he went into the desert of the east, to the land where Moses had gone up into Mount Sinai to meet God. And as Elijah waited on the mountain, there was a great and strong wind, and then an earthquake, and then a fire; and, after the wind and the earthquake and the fire, a still, small voice, speaking in Elijah's soul. Thus he knew that the Lord was on his side. And the still, small voice told him to call Elisha to be a prophet to follow in his steps, and to anoint Jehu to be king over Israel that he might destroy the religion of Baal.

So Elijah called Elisha, meeting him in the field where he was plowing with twelve yoke of oxen, and casting his mantle over his shoulders. And Elisha became a prophet. As for Elijah, men loved to tell in after days how he was taken up into heaven riding in a chariot of fire.

Also Ahab ended his life in a chariot, but very differently. For war arose again between the men of Damascus and the men of Samaria, and Ahab sent for his neighbor Jehoshaphat of Jerusalem to help him. Now, before the battle, the king of Israel and the king of Judah sat each on his throne in the gate of Samaria and called the four hundred prophets of the Lord who were in that place to counsel them.

The kings said, "Shall we go to war, or not?"

And all the prophets said, "Go and prosper."

But there stood up against them one honest prophet named Micaiah, who said, "I saw all Israel scattered upon the hills, as sheep having no shepherd." Nevertheless, the kings disregarded the warning of Micaiah, and went to battle with Benhadad. And the battle went against the two kings. Jehoshaphat fled for his life, and Ahab was wounded with an arrow. He stood in his chariot and tried to rally his soldiers, but as the sun went down he died, and the day was lost.

Now Elisha had taken the place of Elijah. Instead of living like his master in the hills and deserts, he dwelt among the people. One of his homes was with a man and his wife who furnished a chamber for him, providing a bed and a table and a stool and a candlestick. One time their little son fell sick, crying, "My head! My head!" and they sent for Elisha, and he found the boy lying as one dead, and he prayed and brought him back to life.

One time a captain of the king of Damascus fell sick with leprosy. And there was a little Israelite girl in his family, who had been brought away captive in the war between Damascus and Samaria; and she said, "If my master, Naaman, were to go to Israel, there is a prophet there who could recover him." So Naaman went, and came to the house of Elisha, and he sent him to wash in the river Jordan. And as he washed, he was cleansed.

One time, the men of Damascus fought so hard against the men of Samaria that they shut up the city of Samaria, and nobody could go out or come in, and the people in the city began to be very hungry. At last, when they were in danger of starvation, Elisha said, "We shall have food to-

morrow." And that night, four men said one to another, "If we stay here we shall die, and if we go out to the camp of the enemy and ask for food they can do no worse than put us to death. Let us take the risk." But when they came to the camp, it was empty. A sudden fear had fallen on the men of Damascus, and they had fled away.

At last, the time came for Elisha to do the errand which had been entrusted to him by Elijah. Joram, the son of Ahab, was now the king of Israel, and Ahaziah, the son of Ahab's daughter, Athaliah, was king of Judah. The war was still in progress against the Syrians of Damascus. Joram had been wounded; Ahaziah had come to see him; and the two kings were in the fortress of Jezreel. The captain in the field was Jehu. To Jehu Elisha sent a messenger, who anointed him with oil, as Samuel had anointed Saul, crying, "Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, I have anointed thee king over the people of the Lord."

Then Jehu told his soldiers, and they shouted, "Jehu is king!" And Jehu set out for Jezreel, driving furiously up the long valley from the Jordan. The two kings came out to meet him, and he killed them both, shooting them with arrows. Jezebel looked out upon him from a window, and

he called to men inside to throw her down. So she fell and died, and he trod her under the feet of his horses. Then he gathered the priests of Baal together as for a solemn assembly in Baal's temple, and he sent his soldiers in, and they locked the doors, and when they came out not one of Baal's priests was left alive. In this fierce and bloody manner, according to the customs of those old times, the contention between the two religions, of the Lord and of Baal, was decided.

KINGS, NORTH AND SOUTH

I Kings 15–II Kings 14.

Judah	Israel
(The House of David)	(The House of Jeroboam)
Rehoboam (937–920)	Jeroboam (937–915)
Abijam (920–917)	Nadab (915–914)
I Kings 15:1–8	I Kings 15:25–27
Asa (917–876)	Baasha (914–890)
15:8–33	usurper 15:27–16:7

Asa fights with Baasha and buys the aid of the Syrians.

Elah. Zimri. (890–889) 16:8–20.
(The House of Omri)
Omri (889–875)
Builds Samaria 16:20–28

Jehoshaphat (876–851)
Ahab (875–853)
16:29–22:40
War with Syria, 20.

Jehoshaphat joins Ahab against Syrians, 22

Ahaziah (853–852)
22:51–II Kings 1.
Joram (852–842)
8:28–9:37.

Jehoshaphat joins Joram against Moabites, 3.

Joram (851–843)
8:16–24.
Ahaziah (843–842)

Ahaziah and Joram of Israel killed by Jehu 8:25–9:27

	(The House of Jehu)
Athaliah (842–836)	Jehu (842–815)
usurper, 11.	usurper, 10.
Joash (836–796)	Jehoahaz (815–798)
Repairs temple, 12	Subject to Syria, 13:1–9
Amaziah (796–789)	Joash (798–782)

Amaziah is defeated in war with Joash, 14.

Uzziah and Jotham (789-735)	Jeroboam II (782–741)
15:1–7	14:23–29

Forty years of peace and prosperity.

AMONG the rulers of the two kingdoms, north and south, four are especially to be remembered; in the kingdom of Israel, Jehu, and at the sametime in the kingdom of Judah, Athaliah; also in the kingdom of Israel, Jeroboam II, and at the same time in the kingdom of Judah, Uzziah.

Athaliah, like Jehu, was a usurper. When she heard that Jehu had killed her son Ahaziah, she seized the throne of Judah. Jehu had begun his reign by killing all of the royal family of Israel; Athaliah tried to follow his example. She succeeded in killing all her grandchildren, the princes of Judah, except one. Little Joash, Ahaziah's son, was hidden by his aunt and his nurse, and the queen did not find him. Thus he lived in hiding for six years. Then a brave priest, Jehoida, brought certain trusted rulers and captains into

the temple, and showed them the king's son. And on an appointed day, when all was ready, the little prince was crowned in the temple, all the soldiers standing about him with swords drawn, shouting, "God save the king!" And Athaliah heard the noise and came into the temple, and when she saw the armed men, and the prince with the crown upon his head, she cried "Treason! Treason!" But all the people were on the side of the young king. So Athaliah was put to death, and the temple of Baal in which she had worshipped, like her mother Jezebel, was broken down.

The most prosperous of the kings of Israel was Jeroboam II. Also prosperous among the kings of Judah was Uzziah. These two reigned in the first half of the eighth century before Christ, each of them for about forty years. A great part of their peace and prosperity was due to the fact that their old enemies, the Syrians of Damascus, were attacked by invaders from the east. The new foes were the Assyrians.

The world-power with which the Israelites had thus far been acquainted was Egypt, at the western corner of the Semitic triangle, where their fathers had been slaves. But now Assyria, at the eastern corner, began to push its boundaries to-

ward the Mediterranean. Already, as their own inscriptions show, the Assyrians had defeated Ahab, and had received tribute from Jehu. They appeared afar off on the horizon like the first black clouds of a great storm. On they came, in fierce and mighty invasion. Their attack fell first upon the kingdom of Damascus.

Thus Jeroboam II and Uzziah, being delivered from the fear of the Syrians, and understanding only very dimly that the same destruction was coming on them also, extended their boundaries and their markets, and restored again for the moment an empire which if it had been united would have been even greater than Solomon's.

It was in the reign of these two kings that the first books of the Bible were written. Two prophets, Amos and Hosea, not only preached sermons against the evils of the kingdom of Israel, but wrote them down in the form in which we have them now.

Already there were songs and psalms, some of them older than the time of David; and there were proverbs, as old as the time of Solomon. But neither psalms nor proverbs had been gathered together into books. It is probable that the lives of Elijah and Elisha had been written, and that

there were accounts of the reigns of Saul and David and Solomon, and of the Revolution, and of the events after the Revolution, but these were not yet collected to make the books of Samuel and Kings. And there were stories of the ancient time, and laws, some written and some unwritten. It is likely that in the days of Jeroboam II and of Uzziah, good men in the kingdom of Israel and good men in the kingdom of Judah were making the collections of these memorable stories and records which were afterwards put together to form the books of Genesis and Exodus and others.

As yet, however, there was no Bible. The materials for a Bible were many of them at hand, like the boards and beams and bricks to make a house, but they were not built into our Bible book. Amos was the first book of the Bible to be written; Hosea was the second.

THE INVASION OF THE ASSYRIANS

II Kings 15–20

Judah	Israel
Ahaz (735–715) 16:1–20	Zechariah (741) 15:8–12
	Shallum (741) usurper, 15:10–15
	Menahem (741–737) Assyrians take tribute 15:14–22
	Pekahiah (737) 15:23–26
	Pekah (736–734) Assyrians invade 15:27–31
Ahab being besieged by Pekah buys the aid of the Assyrians.	
Hezekiah (715–686) 18, 19, 20	Hosea (734–722) Assyrians destroy the Kingdom of Israel 17:1–41.
Assyrians besiege Jerusalem (701)	

JEROBOAM II was the last strong king of Israel. His son was murdered after a reign of six months; the man who murdered him reigned only onemonth. The land was filled with disorder. One king, indeed, ruled for several years, but his son was killed after a brief reign. Pekah, who thus seized the

crown by killing the king, joined with Rezin, king of Damascus, in defying Assyria. The Assyrians kept sending to Damascus and to Samaria, demanding money, and Pekah and Rezin determined not to pay it.

In order, however, to defy Assyria successfully, they must have the help of their neighbors. So they sent to Jerusalem, to Ahaz, king of Judah, to ask him to come with his army and join their armies. But Ahaz would not do it. And when they tried to make him do it, and began to march their armies down to attack Jerusalem, Ahaz sent messengers to Assyria, with a great amount of gold and silver from the palace and the temple, and said, "All this will I give, if you will save me from the armies of Pekah and Rezin."

Now the king of Assyria at that time was Tiglath-pileser. He was a strong ruler, and it was his desire to conquer the world. He had invented a remarkable plan whereby, when he conquered a nation, it should stay conquered. His plan was to remove a great portion of the people of the defeated nation, and settle them in other parts of his vast empire, and bring in new people in their place. Thus a conquered kingdom lost its very existence.

Tiglath-pileser took the treasures which Ahaz

sent and marched his tremendous army against the kingdom of Damascus and against the kingdom of Israel. That was the end of the power of Damascus. The city was destroyed and the people carried into exile. It was the beginning of the end of the power of Israel. A great number of the people were taken into Assyria, and the land became an Assyrian province.

Some years later, the people ventured to rebel against their masters, hoping, but in vain, for help from Egypt. Then the Assyrians, under Sargon their king, completed the destruction of the nation. They pulled down the city of Samaria, after a long seige. They carried away thousands of the people into their own lands beside the Euphrates and the Tigris. Some settled here, some there, and lost both their nationality and their religion. They became like their victorious neighbors, into whose families they married, and whose customs they adopted.

New people were brought from Assyria to settle the land from which the men of Israel had been taken. But at first they were so few that the lions attacked them. Out of the woods around the ruined cities came the lions. At last, the new colonists said, "It is because we are not worship-

ping the God of the Land." And they sent for priests from among the exiled Israelites to come back and teach the Assyrian colonists the religion of the God of the Land. Thus they settled down together, the new Assyrian settlers and such as were left of the Israelites, and their religion was partly Israelite and partly Assyrian. They were called Samaritans.

Thus the kingdom of Israel was ended, after a history of about two hundred years. The date of the destruction of Samaria is 722 B.C. The reign of Jeroboam I, by whom the kingdom was founded; the reign of Ahab, who strengthened it by alliances with Damascus, with Jerusalem and with Tyre; the reign of Jehu, the usurper, who brought to a tragic end the worship of Baal; the reign of Jeroboam II whose power recalled the days of Solomon; and the fall of Samaria at the hands of the Assyrians, are the chief chapters of its history.

THE INVASION OF THE CHALDEANS

II Kings 21–25

Manasseh (686–641)
The great apostasy 21:1–18
Amon (641–639) 21:19–26
Josiah (639–608)
The great reformation 22:1–23:30
Defeated and killed by Necho of Egypt
Jehoahaz (608)
Dethroned by Necho 23:30–33
Jehoiakim (608–597)
Chaldeans take Nineveh (606), defeat Egyptians at Carchemish (605), and become masters of Judah 23:24–24:7
Jehoiachin (597)
Chaldeans take Jerusalem, and carry away first company of exiles 24:8–16 25:27–30
Zedekiah (597–586)
Chaldeans destroy Jerusalem, and carry away second company of exiles, 24:17–25:21
Gedaliah made governor of remnant in Judah; killed by Ishmael who flees to Egypt 25:22–26.

BY his great gift of gold and silver to the king of Assyria, Ahaz of Judah had brought about the destruction of his enemies of Damascus and Samaria, and for the moment had gained peace. But trouble was near at hand. Sennacherib be-

came ruler of Assyria, and made war with Egypt and Ethiopia. He brought his army down over the ancient war-path by the sea, and turned aside to destroy Jerusalem. He sent an officer to demand the surrender of the city. That was in 701, and the king was Hezekiah. The king and his people were in the utmost fear. Nothing but desolation and death seemed possible.

Outside the city a great prophet named Micah was declaring that the distress of Jerusalem was a punishment for the wickedness of its inhabitants. But within the city, a greater prophet named Isaiah, while, like Micah, he rebuked the sins of the people, nevertheless declared that the city should be saved. Thus he prayed to God. Then one morning, the army of Sennacherib suddenly marched away. Whether they had news of trouble in their own country, or whether a plague broke out among them, is unknown. Anyhow, away they went, and the city was delivered.

The great deliverance, and the preaching of Micah and Isaiah, made Hezekiah a reformer. One thing he did was to take a brazen serpent which was kept in the temple, and which they said Moses had made in the desert, and break it in pieces. The like he did also to other idols.

But Hezekiah died, and Manasseh his son reigned in his stead, and all this reformation ceased. The simple and moral religion of the Israelites had been affected all along by the ceremonial and immoral religion of the Canaanites. There were ancient altars on the high hills and under the great trees, and although the people who prayed at these places said their prayers to the God of Israel, they thought about God as the Canaanites had thought about their gods, and believed that what God cares for is a splendid service, with singing and lights and incense. They forgot that what God cares for most is a good life.

When Manasseh became king, he encouraged all this. Besides the altar of the God of Israel, he built altars to the sun and moon and stars. Even in the temple, he set up a sacred pole, such as stood by shrines of Baal. And the prophets of the true religion who protested against these evils, he persecuted. It seemed for a long time as if the religion of the Lord God had perished out of the land, and the religion of the Canaanites, or of the Assyrians, had taken its place.

Early, however, in the reign of Josiah, a book was found in the temple. It contained chapters of laws, declaring the will of God. These laws

forbade all the evils which had been practised in the days of Manasseh and which were still done by many of the people. This book now forms the middle part of Deuteronomy — a name which means a second giving of the law. It was the ancient law of Moses, brought together out of old records and memories, and applied to the needs of that day. Some things it omitted, as of use only in the life of a desert people; other things it added, as the will of God had been revealed by experience. It was the law of Moses, rewritten by men who saw that the evils of Manasseh were against the will of God, and who said so in this way. It was an explanation of the ancient law in the light of the teachings of Amos and Hosea, of Micah and Isaiah. It taught the love of God, but it showed at the same time that God is against all wrong, and that He will certainly punish all wrong-doers. Also, in consequence of the superstitions of the shrines on the hills and under the trees, it forbade all worship in these places, and declared that the only true altar of God was in the temple at Jerusalem.

The result of the finding of this book was a reformation. Everything that the book said, Josiah tried to do. In this he was assisted by a

good priest, Hilkiah, and by earnest prophets, one of whom was Zephaniah, and another was Jeremiah.

Meanwhile, a new power was rising in the east. Assyria, which had ruled the world, was meeting mighty enemies. When Zephaniah wrote, it seemed likely that the Assyrians would be overthrown by the Scythians, whose wild armies were coming down from the north. But the victorious enemy came from the south. The Chaldeans, whose capital city was Babylon, came up and conquered the Assyrians, whose capital city was Nineveh. The prophet Nahum heard of their triumphant march and rejoiced to think that great Nineveh should at last be brought to the ground. But the prophet Habakkuk who wrote after the destruction of Nineveh, was dismayed to find that the victorious Chaldeans were coming on into the west.

Up marched the Chaldeans along the eastern side of the Semitic triangle, and up marched the Egyptians along the western side. Thus the Chaldean army under Nebuchadnezzar met, at Carchemish, the Egyptian army under Necho, and the two fought for the ownership of the world. And the Babylonians won the battle. Then

Nebuchadnezzar continued his march, and came at last to the gates of Jerusalem.

The city was not only in terror but in mourning, for Josiah had gone out with his army to attack the Egyptians on their way to Carchemish, and had been defeated and killed. Thus died the last great king of Judah.

Nebuchadnezzar was content for the time to take possession of Jerusalem and Judah. The land was left to be governed by its own kings. But the kings were weak, and foolishly trusted in the power of Egypt to help them against Babylon. This confidence Jeremiah stoutly opposed. The prophet was put in the stocks, and in prison, and his life was constantly in peril from those who would make friends with Egypt. At last, Jehoiakim, king of Judah, rebelled against Babylon, and Nebuchadnezzar came and took Jerusalem, and carried away into exile in Babylonia the chief citizens and chief soldiers of the land.

Even after that, Jerusalem under Zedekiah rebelled again, still trusting in the strength of Egypt. This time Nebuchadnezzar destroyed the city. He stripped the temple and the palace of all the treasures which remained. He broke down the walls and houses. The king's sons he

killed before his eyes, then blinded him and carried him to Babylon. With him he led into exile most of the remaining people of Judah. Some fled to Egypt; some were hidden in the farms and forests; some were too insignificant to take away. But the nation was removed out of its place. The exiles of Judah were settled in the neighborhood of Babylon.

Thus the kingdom of Judah was destroyed; the date is 586. The reign of Rehoboam, in whose time occurred the Revolution; the excellent reigns of Asa and Jehoshaphat, who followed him; the reign of Athaliah the usurper; the long peace in the days of Uzziah; the reign of Ahaz, who saw the Assyrians destroy the kingdom of Israel, and of Hezekiah, who saw the Assyrians at the gates of Jerusalem; the heathern reaction under Manasseh; the reformation under Josiah; and the fall of Jerusalem at the hands of the Chaldeans are the chief chapters of its history.

THE ERA OF THE FOREIGN RULERS

Ezra, Nehemiah

1. The Persians, under Cyrus, overthrow the Babylonians (539)
   (1) The return from exile, Ezra 1, 2
   (2) The restoration of the temple (516) 3–6
   Opposition of Samaritans, 4.
   (3) The mission of Ezra
   The re-enactment of the law, Nehemiah 8, 9
   Separation from Gentiles, Ezra 7–10
   (4) The mission of Nehemiah
   The rebuilding of the walls, Nehemiah 1–7
   Opposition of Samaritans, 4, 6.
   Separation from Gentiles, 13.
2. The Greeks, under Alexander, overthrow the Persians (332)

Esther

1. The king choses Esther, 1, 2.
2. Haman against Mordecai and the Jews, 3.
3. Esther and Mordecai against Haman, 5–9
   (1) Haman is hanged
   (2) The Jews kill the Persians

THE kingdom of Israel perished at the fall of Samaria, and was no more heard of. The people who were carried into exile became Assy-

rians; the people who were left in the land became Samaritans.

The kingdom of Judah perished at the fall of Jerusalem, and never regained its place as an independent nation. But the Jews who were carried into exile by the Chaldeans were settled in one place, and kept their old customs and religion. They ceased to be a kingdom, but they became a church. From that time on they were under foreign rulers: Chaldeans, Persians, Greeks and Romans; but they had their own priests.

The change from the kingdom of Judah to the Jewish Church was made during the exile, under the leadership of Ezekiel. He was one of the very great men of the Bible history. Abraham was the father of the Hebrew race; Moses, delivering the people from slavery, made them a nation; under the guidance of Samuel, they became a kingdom; under the guidance of Ezekiel, they became a church.

The great desire of Ezekiel, and of those who worked with him was to keep the Jews separate from the Chaldeans. They were not to partake in the life of their masters, but were to live their own life, keeping their own laws. The temple was indeed destroyed, and the sacrifices had therefore

ceased; but even these they hoped to offer again, in a restored temple, when they should return to their own land. Meanwhile, there were many customs to be still observed. The Sabbath was to be kept. The distinction between what was holy and unholy, or clean and unclean, in food was still to be carefully made. This was one of the most important rules because it kept the Jews apart from the Chaldeans; they could not eat what the Chaldeans ate, they could not join them at their meals.

In order, then, to remember just how the sacrifices had been offered in the temple, so that they might be offered in the old way when the deliverance should come, they wrote down careful directions, describing these services. And in order to secure the keeping of the laws about the Sabbath, and about the clean and the unclean, they wrote these also. Some of these directions and laws were very old, going back into the days of Moses; some had been added as the need had arisen since. The book which was thus written was in great part that which we now call Leviticus.

Thus the law which Moses gave at Sinai had grown into two books: Deuteronomy, containing laws relating for the most part to the conduct of

daily life, and Leviticus, containing laws relating for the most part to the conduct of the services and customs of religion.

After the Jews had lived for fifty years in exile, a great change took place in the affairs of that part of the world. The Chaldeans who had conquered the Assyrians, were in their turn conquered by the Persians. Cyrus the Persian captured Babylon. The result of this change was the deliverance of the Jews.

Back they went as many as desired, to their own land. They had a prince named Zerubbabel, and a priest named Joshua. But their king was Cyrus; and after Cyrus, Darius. That is, their land and they themselves were under the rule of the Persians. Thus they settled in their ruined cities, and tried to make themselves once more a people. But they were poor, and easily discouraged. Moreover, the Samaritans came and troubled them, and for a time the work of rebuilding Jerusalem was stopped. Two prophets, however, Haggai and Zechariah, urged the people, and at last the new temple, on the ruins of the old, was finished.

Between the sixth and seventh chapters of the book of Ezra is a space of sixty years. Nothing is

told us of the history of the Jews during that time, but such important events were taking place in Greece and in other parts of the world, that it is well to refer to them for a moment that we may see where we are in general history. This fifth century before Christ was one of the most remarkable of all centuries. In this century, Aeschylus and Sophocles and Euripides were writing their plays, Herodotus and Thucydides were writing their histories; Socrates was teaching his philosophy, with Plato as one of his pupils; Leonidas and his Spartans defended the pass of Thermopylae against the Persians. Also, Confucius was teaching in China, and Gautama was founding the religion of Buddha in India.

In this period is laid the scene of the story of Esther. She was a Jewish girl who became queen of Persia. The king, whose name in Hebrew was Ahasuerus, was the Xerxes who led his great army against Greece, and fought at Thermopylae and was decisively defeated at Salamis. One of the courtiers of Ahasuerus, named Haman, was the bitter enemy of another courtier, a Jew and uncle of Esther, named Mordecai. Haman made a plot to kill Mordecai, and to massacre the Jews, but Esther discovered it, and Haman was hanged on

the gallows which he had built for his enemy. Then for several days, the Jews were permitted to kill as many Persians as they pleased; and Esther got the time extended, so that they might kill more. The story is so improbable, and so filled with the spirit of hatred, and so lacking in religion, not once mentioning the name of God, that it was only after long debate and grave doubt that it was bound up with the books of the Bible.

In the second half of this great century Ezra and Nehemiah were counsellors and leaders of the Jews. Ezra, the scribe, brought the law with him from the land of exile. The reference is probably to the first five books of the Old Testament. Nehemiah, the statesman, who had been the cupbearer of Artaxerxes, king of Persia, succeeded at last in rebuilding the walls of Jerusalem. The prophet of this period was Malachi.

Here the Old Testament history comes to an end. The Persians were afterwards conquered by the Greeks under Alexander, who thus became the masters of the Jews. Some of Alexander's generals called the Seleucids, settled in Syria, north of Judea. Others, called the Ptolemies, settled in the south, in Egypt. The Jews had a sad time between them. One of the Ptolemies, named

Antiochus Epiphanes, tried to destroy the temple and the religion of the Jews. Against him rose up brave Judas Maccabeus and drove him away, and for a little while the land was independent. Finally, the Greeks were conquered by the Romans. They were the rulers of the Jews when Christ was born.

THE NEW HISTORY

1. The First Book of Chronicles
   (1) Adam to Samuel, 1–9
   parallel with Genesis to Judges
   (2) Saul, 10, and David, 11–29
   parallel with Samuel.
2. The Second Book of Chronicles
   (1) Solomon, 1–9
   (2) Kings of Judah, 10–36
   parallel with Kings.

MANY of the events which we have been reviewing in these chapters are described in the Bible twice. The first book of Chronicles goes over the same ground as the books of Samuel, and the second book of Chronicles goes over the same ground as the books of Kings.

Look at II Samuel 5, beginning at the seventeenth verse, and then at I Chronicles 14, beginning at the eighth verse. Two battles of David with the Philistines are described in almost the same words. The next chapter of Samuel gives an account of the bringing of the ark to Jerusalem; so also do the next chapters of Chronicles. Now however, the Chronicles make many additions.

Where the record in Samuel occupies one chapter, the record in Chronicles occupies two. The Chronicles give the names of the men who carried the ark, and of the men who played on instruments of music and sang, and report the words of the psalm in which David thanked God that day.

Sometimes the Chronicles leave out chapters which are found in Samuel. Look at the end of the tenth chapter of II Samuel; the last words are "So the Syrians feared to help the children of Ammon any more." The nineteenth chapter of I Chronicles ends in the same way; "Neither would the Syrians help the children of Ammon any more." Up to this point, the two histories have been going over the same road, saying the same things. But now the writer of Samuel begins to tell about the sins of David, the story of Bathsheba and the story of Absolom. Then he comes to an account of the taking of a census. He says, "The anger of the Lord was kindled against Israel, and he moved David against them to say, 'Go, number Israel and Judah.'" The writer of the Chronicles has not a word about the sins of David; he omits the story of Bathsheba and the story of Absolom. After speaking of the Syrians and the children of Ammon, he has a little chapter about

the king of Ammon's crown. Then he says, "And Satan stood up against Israel and provoked David to number Israel." Here the two histories come together again. Also, the Chronicles leave out all the stories of Elijah and Elisha.

There are accordingly in the Old Testament two series of histories. The first begins with Genesis and ends with II Kings. It gives an account of events from the creation of the world and man to the exile of the Jewish people. The second begins with I Chronicles and ends with Nehemiah. It gives an account of events from the creation of Adam to the return of the Jewish people from their exile, and their rebuilding of the holy temple and the holy city.

The first series of histories was composed, as we have seen, of many ancient materials, the memories and records of the people. It must have been completed before 536, because it makes no mention of Cyrus, who in that year having captured Babylon, permitted the Jews to return. When the last writer of that series of histories laid down his pen, there was no sign that the exile might soon be ended. Cyrus, the deliverer, had not been heard of.

The second series of histories was composed

largely of materials taken from the first, but it carried the record further. It must have been composed after 332, because it mentions Jaddua, who was high priest that year. Thus the second series was written more than two hundred years after the first.

The writer of the new history lived in Jerusalem, and the kingdom of Judah had become the Jewish Church. He had no interest in the affairs of the kingdom of Israel, which he considered a rebellious nation. He felt that the only history which the people needed to know was the history of the kingdom of Judah. Thus he paid no more attention to the events which took place in Israel than an historian of England might pay to events which took place, after the Revolution, in America. The new history is a history of Judah.

Also, since Judah was in his time a church rather than a kingdom, the new historian was mainly interested in church matters, in accounts of services, and in the temple. This is why he describes at such length the ceremonies of the bringing up of the ark. The new history is a history of the church.

Thus we have these two series of books on the same subject. They both describe the fortunes and misfortunes of the Israelites. We see Abra-

ham, coming from beyond the Euphrates and settling in Palestine; and Joseph, establishing the family in Egypt; and Moses bringing the people out from bondage there, giving them laws at Sinai and training them in the wilderness; and Joshua, leading them to the conquest of the land in which Abraham had settled; and Barak and Gideon and Jephthah and Samson fighting their battles; and Samuel making Saul their king, and after him David and Solomon; then the kingdom divided; the kingdom of Israel ruled by Jeroboam, Ahab, Jehu and Jeroboam II, till its destruction by the Assyrians; the kingdom of Judah ruled by Rehoboam, Asa, Jehoshophat, by Athaliah and Uzziah, by Ahaz, Hezekiah, Manasseh and Josiah, till its destruction by the Babylonians; then the exile of Judah and their return to Jerusalem, and the rebuilding of the city and the walls.

Sometimes the histories agree; sometimes they disagree, and we must decide between them. One series is interested in the people, the other is interested in the church. But they both declare again and again the justice and the love of God, and they both say, and prove it by events, that the duty and prosperity of man consist in keeping God's commandments.

THE OLD TESTAMENT

THE BOOKS OF WISDOM

THE BOOKS OF WISDOM

1. Proverbs
   - (1) The praise of wisdom, 1–9
   - (2) The three collections
     - *a.* The proverbs of Solomon, 10–22:16
     - *b.* The proverbs of the Sages, 22:17–24
     - *c.* The proverbs of Hezekiah, 25–29
   - (3) The three additions
     - *a.* The words of Agur, 30
     - *b.* The words of Lemuel, 31:1–9
     - *c.* The good housewife, 31:10–31
2. Job
   - (1) Prologue (prose)
     Two celestial councils 1, 2
   - (2) Poem
     - *a.* The complaint of Job, 3
     - *b.* First cycle of speeches, 4–14
     - *c.* Second cycle of speeches, 15–21
     - *d.* Third cycle of speeches, 22–28
     - *e.* The conclusion of Job, 29–31
     - *f.* Elihu speaks, 32–37
     - *g.* God speaks, 38–41
   - (3) Epilogue (prose)
     Job commended, friends condemned, 42
3. Ecclesiastes
   - (1) Prologue; the fact,—"All is vanity," 1:1–11

3. Ecclesiastes (Continued)
   (2) The seven sayings 1:12–2:26
      a. Vanity
      b. Time, 3
      c. Profit, 4, 5
      d. Wealth, 6:1–7:18
      e. Wisdom, 7:19–9:10
      f. Chance, 9:11–11:6
      g. Mortality, 11:7–12:7
   (3) Epilogue; the duty,—"Fear God," 12:8–14.

THE next five books of the Bible are in poetry. Three of these—Proverbs, Job and Ecclesiastes—are books of Wisdom.

There is a kind of study which concerns itself with knowledge, and tries to learn about the stars and the hills, and plants and animals: this is called Science. There is a kind of study which concerns itself with thought, and tries to learn about the working of the mind: this is called Philosophy. Thus science deals with the world outside of us, and philosophy deals with the world within us. There is another kind of study which concerns itself with conduct, and tries to learn from experience and observation the difference between right and wrong, and what we ought to do and not to do: this is what is meant in the Bible by Wisdom

Thus the Proverbs are sentences of good advice. They tell us that wisdom consists in honesty and truth and justice and righteousness. If we are truly wise we will love our friends and be faithful to them; and we will save our money.

The book begins with the Praise of Wisdom, in nine chapters. Side by side stand the House of Wisdom and the House of Folly; and Wisdom and Folly sit by their doors and invite people to come in.

Then there are three collections of wise words: the Proverbs of Solomon, beginning with chapter ten; the Proverbs of the Sages, beginning with verse seventeen in chapter twenty-one,—"Bow down thine ear, and hear the words of the wise"; and the Proverbs of Hezekiah, beginning with chapter twenty-five.

To these there are three short additions: the Words of Agar, in chapter thirty; the Words of Lemuel and the description of the Good Housewife, in chapter thirty-one. The Proverbs say, over and over, that it is foolish to tell lies, to take what does not belong to us, to spend more than we can afford, or to go with bad companions, for all these things are like paths which lead to unhappiness and destruction.

But suppose that a wise man, in spite of all his wisdom, falls into great trouble. What shall he say and do then? He keeps the commandments, and does no wrong thing, yet failure and pain come upon him. A common answer was to say that pain and failure always mean wrong-doing. If a man loses his money, or falls sick with some grievous disease, God is punishing him for some sin. The man must discover his sin and confess it, and stop it.

This answer did not satisfy the writer of the book of Job. He saw that evil comes even to good men. He took, accordingly, for his hero a perfectly good man, named Job. He pictured a scene in Heaven, where God sat on His throne listening to the report which one of His angels, named Satan, brought back from a journey which he had been taking in the earth. Satan said that the best man whom he had found was Job, but he suggested that Job was good only for the sake of the blessings of God; if he were deprived of those blessings he would be as bad as anybody else. God gave Satan leave to try the experiment, and thus all manner of ills fell upon poor Job. His property was destroyed, his sons and daughters died, and he himself was stricken with a painful sickness.

Thus the story begins. Job is found groaning in his distress. Three friends come to see him. They believe, like most people, that Job has done some dreadful wrong, for which God is punishing him. And they tell him so. But Job declares that he is innocent. First speaks Eliphaz the Temanite, and Job answers; then Bildad the Shuhite, and Job answers; then Zophar the Naamathite, and Job answers. This is done three times. After that comes Elihu, another friend, and reproves Job for saying that God is dealing unjustly with him. Finally, God Himself speaks from the clouds, reproving Job's friends and praising the constancy of Job. Then Job's possessions are restored to him seven times as many as he had before, and he lives happily ever after.

Thus the book of Job not only contradicts the notion that pain must mean the sin of man and the anger of God, but shows how a wise man conducts himself in the midst of affliction: Job says of God, "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in Him."

The third book of wisdom, Ecclesiastes, deals with a very different situation. Job shows the behavior of a wise man in adversity, Ecclesiastes shows the behavior of a wise man in prosperity.

The hero of the book is Solomon, who was remembered as both the wisest and the richest of men. He is represented in his old age, as casting aside the cares of state and considering the worth of all his power and wealth. He says that it is all worth nothing. "Vanity of vanities, all is vanity."

Sometimes the emptiness of all earthly things filled him with sadness, especially when he thought how soon our life comes to an end. The great truth of the life to come was very dim in the days of the Old Testament. People seldom thought about it; at least, they seldom wrote about it. When they did speak of another world they represented it, as in the Psalms, as a dark and shadowy place, "where all things are forgotten." The writer of Ecclesiastes refused to consider it at all. A new hope of immortality was coming into the hearts of the people, but he would not share it. "That which befalleth the sons of men," he said, "befalleth beasts; even one thing befalleth them; as the one dieth, so dieth the other; yea, they all have one breath; so that a man hath no preeminence above a beast; for all is vanity."

But sometimes the emptiness of all things earthly filled him with courage. He resolved to

make the most of such life as he had. He would enjoy his work; he would do his best. Even at death the spirit of man returns to God who gave it. In the meantime, "Fear God and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man."

THE BOOK OF PSALMS AND THE BOOK OF SONGS

1. The Psalms
    1. Personal psalms
        First book, 1–41.
    2. National psalms
        Second book, 42–72.
        Third book, 73–89.
    3. Liturgical psalms
        Fourth book, 90–106.
        Fifth book, 107–150.
2. The Song of Solomon
    1. The Camp: The Lily among Thorns, 1:2–2:7.
    2. The Camp: The Dove in the Clefts of the Rock 2:8–3:5.
    3. The Court: The Garden of Spices 3:6–5:8.
    4. The Court: The Chiefest among Ten Thousand, 5:9–8:4.
    5. The Village: Love is Strong as Death, 8:5–14.

LIKE most good people, the Old Testament men and women,—and, no doubt, the Old Testament boys and girls,—loved to sing. When Moses had brought them safely over the Red Sea, immediately his sister Miriam set them to singing: "I

will sing into the Lord, for He hath triumphed gloriously." So sang Deborah and Barak after they had defeated Sisera: "Praise ye the Lord for the avenging of Israel." So sang David in grief over the death of Saul and Jonathan: "The beauty of Israel is slain upon the high places: How are the mighty fallen!" There was singing also on the day when the ark was brought by David to Jerusalem, with music of harps and psalteries and timbrels and cornets and cymbals. And when the ark was set in its place, and especially after the temple was built, the worship of God was expressed in sacred songs.

These songs were called psalms. They began to be written in the days of David, a thousand years before Christ, and the name of David is attached to many of them, as the name of Moses is attached to the laws, and the name of Solomon to the proverbs. Thus a forest may bear the name of the man who set out the first trees.

Century by century, as the kingdom of Judah grew, and great events claimed commemoration of joy or of sorrow, new psalms were added. The book of psalms was enriched, like books of hymns. Thus the one-hundred-and-thirty-seventh psalm was written in the days of the exile: "By the

rivers of Babylon, there we sat down, yea, we wept, when we remembered Zion." And the seventy-fourth psalm was written in the days of the Maccabees: "O God, why hast thou cast us off forever? They break down the carved work with axes and hammers." That was in the second century before Christ. Thus it took more than eight hundred years to write the psalms.

The book as it stands completed in the Bible contains five collections, each ending with a verse of praise.

The first collection is made up mostly of personal psalms. In them the writer expresses his own faith and thanksgiving, and prays for his own needs. The last psalm, the forty-first, ends with the words: "Blessed be the Lord God of Israel from everlasting and to everlasting. Amen and Amen."

The second and third collections are made up mostly of national psalms. They commemorate the blessings of God to the people in general, and pray for the prosperity of the nation. The second book closes at the end of the seventy-second psalm with the words: "Blessed be the Lord God, the God of Israel, who only doeth wondrous things. And blessed be His glorious name forever, and let

the whole earth be filled with His glory; Amen and Amen. The prayers of David the son of Jesse are ended." And the third book closes at the end of the eighty-ninth psalm with the words, "Blessed be the Lord forever more, Amen and Amen."

The fourth and fifth collections are made up mostly of liturgical psalms. They were written for use in the services of the temple. The one-hundred-and-sixth psalm, at the close of the fourth book, ends, "Blessed be the Lord God of Israel from everlasting to everlasting; and let all the people say Amen. Praise ye the Lord." And the one-hundred-and-fiftieth psalm, at the close of the whole book is itself a splendid doxology.

The one-hundred-and-nineteenth psalm, the longest of all, is an alphabet poem. The first eight verses begin each with the first letter of the Hebrew alphabet, and the next eight with the second, and so on. This, of course, does not appear in English; but even in English one can see that every verse contains some word which means the law,—statutes, commandments, judgments, testimonies. Thus the whole psalm is in praise of the law of God.

The short psalms from the one-hundred-and-twentieth to the one-hundred-and-thirty-fourth are called pilgrim psalms, because they were sung

on the way to Jerusalem when the people came to the Passover, and the other feasts. "I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills," they sang, as they came in sight of the hills on which the Holy City stood.

The twenty-second is a passion psalm, whose first words our Lord recited on the cross. The twenty-third is the shepherd psalm. The twenty-ninth is about a thunder storm, the fifty-first is a penitential psalm of great sorrow after sin. The fifty-eighth is an imprecatory psalm, calling down the curse of God on enemies; it shows that there were great truths of religion which the psalmists had not learned, which we have been taught by Him who said "Love your enemies." Such psalms are like mile stones, to which we look back to see how far we have come. The sixty-ninth is a war psalm. The psalms from the ninty-fifth to the hundredth (the "old hundredth,") are said to have been sung when the temple was rebuilt and dedicated, after the exile. The one-hundred-and-fourth is a nature psalm, like the one-hundred-and-forty-eighth.

Very different from the Books of Psalms is the Book of Songs. This is called the Song of Solomon, and is a collection of poems not of religion but of love. It is like Esther in being a book of the Bible

in which the interest is not in religion. And, like Esther, it was taken into the Bible only after long discussion. Some said that these two were good books and should be given to all people to read; some said that they were of no value for the soul, and were of no help in living a good life, and that they did not belong in such a collection of spiritual and moral writings as the Bible. Finally, they were admitted.

The story of the Song of Solomon is not easy to follow, but it seems to tell of a peasant girl of Shunem whom Solomon brings from her village home to his court in Jerusalem. She has a lover, a peasant like herself, and is true to him in spite of all the wealth and pleasure of the court. At last, she is permitted to go back to him. Into the framework of this story are set the songs which they sing.

THE OLD TESTAMENT

THE PROPHETICAL BOOKS

AMOS, HOSEA, MICAH

1. Amos. The Wrath of God.
   - (1) A prophecy of punishment of nations, including Israel, 1, 2.
   - (2) Three warning sermons, 3–6.
     "Hear ye this word,"—3:1, 4:1, 5:1.
   - (3) Five visions, 7–9
     The priest silences the prophet, 7:10–17.
2. Hosea. The Love of God.
   - (1) The parable of the prodigal wife, 1–3
   - (2) A collection of sermons.
     - *a.* The guilt of Israel, 4–8.
     - *b.* The punishment of God, 9, 10.
     - *c.* Yet the love of God, 11–14.
3. Micah. The Assyrian Invasion.
   - (1) A prophecy of punishment of the rich.
     - *a.* An invading army, 1, 2.
     - *b.* A peasant saviour, 3–5.
   - (2) Added words of warning, 6, 7.

OF the three parts of the Old Testament, the first is composed of books of history and the second of books of poetry. We come now to books of prophecy, of which there are sixteen; or, with Lamentations added, seventeen. This is just the number of the books of history, of which there are

sixteen; or, with Esther added, seventeen. Of the sixteen prophecies four are long, and twelve,—called the minor prophets,—are short.

The word prophecy, as it is used in the Bible, means preaching. The prophets often spoke of the future and told what must come to pass, but in their minds the future was always connected with the present. They declared in all their sermons that God will surely bless the righteous and will just as surely punish the wicked. So when they saw the people doing wrong, they prophesied disaster; and when they saw the people sorry for their wrong-doing, they prophesied prosperity. The whole interest of the prophets was in their own time and their own land. They talked to the people about the things which they saw with their own eyes. In an age when there were no newspapers, they took the place of newspapers, and their sermons were like the editorials of great editors. All their sermons were about the events which were taking place, and the questions which were being discussed that very day.

Thus in order to understand the books of the prophets we must understand the questions and the events about which they spoke. Without such knowledge we may indeed find sentences here and

there which are everlastingly true and helpful, but the books themselves will seem confused and difficult, without meaning or interest.

Taking the prophets, then, in the order of time, —which is a little different from the order in the Bible—the first four were Amos, Hosea, Micah and Isaiah; three short and one long. These all belonged to the second half of the eighth century. In the kingdom of Israel, where Amos and Hosea preached, the reign of Jeroboam II was coming to an end, and the time of decline and disorder was following. In the kingdom of Judah, where Micah and Isaiah preached, the reign of Uzziah was ending, and after Uzziah Ahaz, and after Ahaz, Hezekiah, were the kings. The tremendous fact of the time was the Assyrian invasion. Every one of these four prophets found the people doing wickedly, and saw the Assyrians coming to punish them.

Amos, although he preached in the kingdom of Israel, came from the kingdom of Judah, having his home at Tekoa a little village south of Jerusalem. He was a herdsman, living in the fields with his flocks, looking out from his high pasture over the Dead Sea, and getting news of the world from caravans on their way to Egypt.

Thus he heard how people lived in cities, and how in Assyria there was a new, strong king planning the conquest of the world.

At last, he determined to see for himself. He left his flocks, and went up past Jerusalem to Bethel. This was only a little more than twenty miles from Tekoa. There he found a rich city, where princes and merchants lived in great houses, and in whose back streets lived the hungry poor. He found the rich cheating and oppressing the poor. He saw that these dishonest people had a splendid church, with carved pillars and adornments of gold, and gorgeous services to which they went with regularity and devotion. And he stood in the street in front of the church, and lifted up his voice and preached. He declared plainly what God thinks of unjust, cruel and dishonest people in splendid churches.

Presently the priest came out and drove him away. "Go home," he said, "do not speak such words in this place. This is the king's chapel." Thus Amos was put to silence. He went home anp wrote this book.

Hosea became a preacher by reason of a bitter experience. He had an unfaithful wife. She went away and left him; left him and their three

children, a little girl named Lo-ruhamah, and two little boys named Jezreel and Lo-ammi.

Each of these names had a meaning which showed how deeply Hosea was interested in the affairs of the nation. Jezreel meant that God would avenge the blood which Jehu had shed at the fortress of that name, when he killed Jezebel and the two kings. Hosea thus expressed his conviction that the descendant of Jehu then upon the throne should be the last king in the family. Lo-ruhamah means No-pity, and Lo-ammi means No-people. By these names Hosea declared that God would have no pity on the kingdom of Israel in its coming distresses, and that He would no longer regard them as His people.

But Hosea still loved his unfaithful wife. One day, as he passed through the market-place, he saw her there, deserted by her false friends, ragged and hungry, and for sale as a slave. He bought her and took her home. And there gradually a great new truth came into the soul of Hosea. He said to himself "All the people of this kingdom have done to God what my wife did to me. They have gone away and left Him. And they are coming more and more into deep distress, as she did. Surely, God is more loving than I am.

If I still love my wife, God must still love His people."

Thus Hosea learned a new truth about God. He changed his boy's names, calling the one Ruhamah, or Pity, and the other Ammi, or People. Amos had rebuked the sins of the people, declaring that they would be punished; for God is law. Hosea rebuked the same sins with the same earnestness, but he said that though God might punish His people He would not forsake them. If they would repent and do right, He would pity them; they should be His people still; for God is love.

But the people who had not heeded the sermons of Amos did not heed the sermons of Hosea. They went from bad to worse. And the Assyrians came, whom the prophets had seen on the horizon. They came and destroyed the kingdom of Israel, and it had no longer a place among the nations.

Then the Assyrians turned their attention to the kingdom of Judah. The first alarm was sounded by the prophet Micah. He lived at the south-west corner of the upland country of Judah, as Amos had lived at the south-east corner. The village of Moresheth was by the great war-path, along the coast, which the Assyrians would take

if they went down to fight the Egyptians, and at the place where they would turn aside to attack Jerusalem. Micah saw in imagination all the villages about him brought to destruction, all the fair country ruined by the Assyrians. He laid the blame on the wickedness of the rich. He reproached the wealthy landowners of Judah as Amos and Hosea had rebuked the wealthy merchants of Israel. "Now," he cried, "shall they be punished who have oppressed us country people. Now shall Jerusalem be brought to devastation."

But Micah, like Hosea, saw a better future. There should be affliction, as Hosea said, but after that a good time. "Yes," added Micah, "A good time, brought in by a good man. Not from among the wealthy and mighty in Jerusalem, but from among us peasants—some shepherd like David at Bethlehem—shall a new David come to save us."

Thus came into the mind of the Jews the expectation of a great deliverer, whom they called Messiah. Thereafter, at every crisis of their history, where their lives were hard and their foes were cruel, they looked for him to come.

ISAIAH

1. Isaiah of Jerusalem, 1–39.
   - (1) A collection of prophecies, 1–12, concerning the sins of the people, and the two invasions.
   - (2) Concerning foreign nations, 13–23.
   - (3) Concerning the end of the world, 24–27.
   - (4) A collection of prophecies, 28–33, concerning the sins of the people, and the Assyrian invasion.
   - (5) Concerning Edom and Israel, 34, 35.
   - (6) Chapters of history, from II Kings, 36–39.
2. Isaiah of Babylon, 40–66.
   - (1) The certainty of restoration, 40–48, Cyrus the deliverer.
   - (2) The preparation for restoration, 48–59. The Servant of the Lord, suffering for the sins of the world.
   - (3) The joy of restoration, 60–66.

THE speeches of Micah were both preceded and followed by the ministry of Isaiah. Isaiah began to preach before the crisis which aroused Micah, and he continued to preach after that crisis had passed.

In the year when King Uzziah died, a young nobleman in the court of Jerusalem had a vision.

He saw the Lord in the temple, sitting on a throne. In the light of this vision the young man perceived that the men who sat on thrones in Jerusalem and ruled the people were very different from the Lord: also the people were very different from the Lord's idea of what men and women ought to be. The young man was Isaiah.

Immediately he began to do what he could to turn the people from their evil ways and to get them to do right. He became a preacher. His young wife, too, who is called "the prophetess," became a preacher with him. Even their two little boys were given names which were as good as sermons. One was called Shear-jashub; the other was called Maher-shalal-hash-baz. The second name means "Speedy spoil, hasty prey," and thus declares a coming destruction; the first name means, "A remnant shall return," and this means that the destruction shall not destroy the people completely.

Ahaz followed Uzziah on the throne of Judah, and Pekah of Israel and Rezin of Damascus made their appeal to him to join them in resisting Assyria, and when he would not, they marched down to compel him. Isaiah assured him that Assyria would destroy both Damascus and Israel,

and that he had no need to be afraid. But Ahaz disregarded the advice of Isaiah and bought the help of Assyria. It was like a family of mice afraid of another family of mice, and hiring the cat to help them. The Assyrians came and put an end to Damascus and Israel, as Isaiah had said. But they kept hold of Ahaz.

Then Hezekiah came to the throne, and the Assyrian advance continued. The taxes which the Mediterranean provinces—Phoenicia, Philistia and Judah—had to pay to Assyria were a heavy burden. After the death of Sargon, who had destroyed the kingdom of Israel, Assyria seemed for a moment to have lost its power. The king of Babylon rebelled; the king of Egypt began to make threats against Assyria, and tried to stir his neighbors to revolt. There was a strong Egyptian party in Jerusalem who said, "Let us cast off the yoke of Assyria, and rely upon the strength of Egypt." This policy Isaiah opposed. For three years he went about the streets barefooted and dressed like a captive, saying that the whole nation would look like that if they sought help from the Egyptians. Thus he was able to prevent rebellion, for a time.

At last, however, the advocates of revolt pre-

vailed. Judah joined with the neighboring provinces against Assyria. And, as Isaiah had predicted, the Egyptians could do nothing. The Assyrians defeated them in the first battle. The rebellious provinces were immediately punished. Hezekiah was compelled to pay to Assyria such an amount of money that he had to strip off the gold from the doors of the temple to make it up.

Finally, the Assyrians besieged Jerusalem. The ambassador of Sennacherib demanded its surrender. The whole surrounding country was desolated. The misery of the land is described in the first chapter of Isaiah's book. The only hope of the people was in the counsels and prayers of Isaiah. Then suddenly the siege was raised, and the Assyrians returned to their own land. It seemed as if the Lord had reached down His mighty arm from Heaven, and had saved His holy city.

These two invasions—of Israel and Damascus in the days of Ahaz, and of Assyria in the days of Hezekiah—were the chief events of Isaiah's ministry. But there are many more sermons in the book than those which relate to these two wars. There is a series of chapters about foreign nations, and a discourse on the end of the world.

Indeed, the whole latter part of the book is not only unrelated to these crises, but is unconnected even with Isaiah. At the fortieth chapter, the scene and time are suddenly changed. In the chapters ending with the thirty-ninth, the scene is Jerusalem, the time is the eighth century before Christ, the world-power which terrifies the nation is Assyria, the great king is Sennacherib. In the chapters beginning with the fortieth, the scene is Babylon, the time is the sixth century before Christ, the world power which threatens the nations is Persia, the great king is Cyrus. In the first part of the book the prophet is assuring the people that Jerusalem shall not be destroyed. In the second part of the book, Jerusalem has been destroyed, and after lying for many years in ruins, the prophet is promising that it shall be rebuilt. Of course, the explanation is that in the book which we call Isaiah, two quite different books are bound together.

In the sad days of the exile, a great prophet and poet, who is called the Second Isaiah because we do not know his name, wrote these last chapters of encouragement and assurance. The Lord said to him, "Comfort ye my people"; and thus he comforted them.

ZEPHANIAH, NAHUM AND HABAKKUK

1. Zephaniah; the Scythian Invasian.
   (1) The Day of the Lord upon Jerusalem, 1.
   (2) The Day of the Lord upon the nations, 2, 3.
2. Nahum: Before the Fall of Nineveh.
   (1) An Ode of the Vengeance of the Lord, 1.
   (2) An Ode of the Vengeance of the Lord on Assyria, 2, 3.
3. Habakkuk: After the Fall of Nineveh.
   (1) Dialogue: The Prosperity of the Wicked, 1.
   (2) Five songs of defiance, 2.
   (3) A psalm of the Might of God, 3.

AFTER the preaching of Amos and Hosea, and of Micah and Isaiah, in the latter half of the eighth century, there was silence for fifty years. That was when Manasseh was king, when anybody who dared to defend the true religion would have had his head taken off.

When Manasseh died, and the good Josiah came to the throne, and in the latter half of the seventh century, four more men declared the will of God against the sins of the people. Thus we have from

that time three short books written by Zephaniah, Nahum and Habakkuk, and one long book written by Jeremiah.

Zephaniah was moved to speak his mind, and God's mind, about the way in which men and women were living in Jerusalem, by the approach of some great peril. Not only the kingdom of Judah, but lands so far apart as Philistia in the west, and Assyria in the east, and Ethiopia in the south, were menaced with invasion. A great and terrible enemy was threatening to destroy the nations of the earth. Such an enemy was the army of the wild Scythians, who at that time were coming down from the vast plains of Russia to attack the civilized countries of Asia. They were first of that vast multitude of barbarians who afterward, as Goths and Huns and Vandals, overthrew the Roman Empire. They were so fierce, and the land behind them was left so desolate, that their coming seemed like the end of all things. Zephaniah called it the Day of the Lord. He expected nothing less than universal destruction; and it was a punishment, he said, for sin. It was a Day of Judgment.

The Scythians did not destroy Jerusalem, as Zephaniah feared. For the moment, they aided

Jerusalem by weakening the power of Assyria. Down they came on Nineveh from the north, and up came the rebellious Chaldeans from the south, and at last the city fell. Nineveh was destroyed, and Babylon became the capital of the world.

This tremendous event called out the words of Nahum and Habakkuk. Nahum seems to have written his book before the fall of Nineveh, but when the power of her enemies was plain. He imagined from afar the taking of the city,—the noise of the whips, the noise of the rattling wheels of the jumping chariots as the besiegers with swords and spears made their way into the streets. "Nineveh," he cried, "is laid waste. Who will bemoan her?" That great Assyrian power, which had destroyed the kingdom of Israel, and threatened the kingdom of Judah, whose hand was heavy on all the nations, was now to meet the proper punishment for years of oppression. Nahum was glad. The thought of the ruin of Nineveh filled him with joy.

To Habakkuk, however, who wrote after the destruction of Nineveh, the situation was not so clear. The Assyrians, indeed, the old enemies and masters of the Jews, had been brought low, but in their place stood the Chaldeans, the lords of

Babylon. And the Chaldeans were coming to invade the West. The old enemies had been exchanged for new; and the new, it seemed, were worse than the old: "A bitter and a hasty nation, terrible and dreadful," with horses swifter than leopards and fiercer than wolves, coming all for violence.

Thus the book of Habakkuk begins with a dialogue. "O Lord," says the prophet, "how long shall I cry unto Thee, and Thou wilt not hear?"

"I do hear," says the Lord, "have I not destroyed your oppressors, the Assyrians?"

"Yes, Lord," replies the prophet, "but Thou hast raised up a worse nation, the Chaldeans. Wherefore holdest Thou Thy peace when the wicked swalloweth up the man who is more righteous than he?"

To this question which men have always asked, and are still asking—the problem of the prosperity of the wicked and of the adversity of the good—the book contains two answers. One is that the Chaldeans, wicked as they are, shall punish the wickedness of Judah; they are an instrument in the Lord's hands to bring about His great purposes. The other is that life consists in righteousness; "the just shall live by his faith." Not

wealth, nor health, nor prosperity, nor peace is the best possession, but a good conscience. They who trust God and serve Him have an abiding happiness which no Chaldeans nor any other calamities can take away.

Then the prophet sings five defiant songs against the approaching enemy. The book ends with a psalm concerning the mighty power of God.

JEREMIAH

1. The book which the king burned, 1–17.
   (1) The prophets call, 1.
   (2) His first sermon, 2–6.
   (3) "Amend your ways," 7–10.
   (4) "Hear the words of the covenant," 11–17.
2. Prophecies on various occasions, 18–33.
   (1) The sermon which led to the stocks, 19.
   (2) Sermons on kings, 21–23:1-8.
   (3) A sermon on prophets, 23:9–40.
   (4) The people left behind, 24.
   (5) The battle of Carchemish, 25.
   (6) The sermon which raised the mob, 26.
   (7) In the reign of Zedekiah, 27–29.
   (8) On the restoration of the exiles, 30–33.
3. Chapters of history, 34–45.
   The final siege of Jerusalem.
4. Prophecies concerning foreign nations, 46–51, with II Kings 24:18—25:30 quoted, 52.

THEY brought one day to King Jehoiakim a roll of writing. "Baruch, the scribe," they said, "has been reading this roll to a great crowd of people in the temple, and we have had him read it to us princes. We think that you ought to hear it."

Now the king was in his winter palace, and a

fire was burning before him on the hearth. So he listened while one read from the roll of writing. Every sentence made him more angry. At last, after three or four leaves had been read, he snatched it from the reader's hand, cut it in pieces with his penknife, and threw it into the fire till it was all consumed. Then he sent officers to arrest Baruch and the writer of the roll, but they could not find them.

This writing was the first copy of the book of Jeremiah. When he heard what the king had done, he called Baruch and dictated to him again all that was in the roll, and more also, and Baruch wrote it as he spoke it. This we have in the first seventeen chapters of the book.

In this writing, Jeremiah gave an account of his ministry of twenty years.

He had become a prophet when the Scythians were bringing upon the nations the terror which had inspired Zephaniah. He had read the book of Deuteronomy, when it was a new book, just found in its hiding-place in the temple, and had taken part in the reformation which was thus stirred up. He had lamented the untimely death of Josiah in the battle with the Egyptian. All this time he had set himself against the sins of the

princes and the priests of Judah. The princes he accused of injustice, the priests he accused of idolatry. All of them, he said, had forsaken God. And the whole people should be punished. He spoke very plainly of the king, who in the midst of the poverty of the land was building a new palace and making men work for him for nothing. Such words as these cannot be spoken without making enemies. The king, the priests and the princes hated Jeremiah.

One time, in the court of the temple, he declared that the ministers of God in Jerusalem were so offensive to God, by their sins and their worship of other gods, that the temple should certainly be destroyed. And a mob tried to kill him.

One time, in the valley of Hinnom, he called the rulers of Jerusalem together, and taking a bottle in his hand broke it into a hundred pieces, and declared that on account of the wickedness of the princes God would thus shatter the kingdom of Judah. They put him in the stocks by the gate of the temple, and exposed him to the insults of the people.

To this preaching against the bad morals of the princes and the bad religion of the priests, Jeremiah added his preaching against the bad

politics of the king and his court. The victory of the Chaldeans over the Egyptians at Carchemish revealed to Jeremiah the fact that Nebuchadnezzar was the master of the world. King Jehoiakim did not believe it. It seemed to him, and to many others, that the Egyptians, in spite of their defeat, would yet conquer the Chaldeans. Thus there were two parties in Judah, a great Egyptian party planning revolt against Nebuchadnezzar, and a small Chaldean party, led by Jeremiah, urging the people to resist a rebellion so foolish and so certain to be fatal.

In spite of Jeremiah, Jehoiakim rebelled against Chaldea. At first, Nebuchadnezzar sent only a few soldiers against him. Among the people whom these soldiers drove in from the fields to take refuge in Jerusalem were the Rechabites, whom Jeremiah made the text of a sermon. Their father, wishing to keep them from the evils of cities, had commanded them never to live in houses nor to drink wine. Even in Jerusalem they lived in the streets in tents, and drank no wine. "See," cried Jeremiah to the people, "how the Rechabites keep the commandment of their father, while you disobey the will of God."

Jehoiakim died before the storm which he had

invited broke upon the land. But Jehoiachin his son was carried captive to Babylon, and Jerusalem was plundered of its treasurers, and ten thousand leading citizens, with their wives and children, followed the exiled king. Jeremiah remained. But the people had not learned their lesson. The removal of the chief citizens had brought forward new and inferior men. They took the empty places, and moved into the empty houses, and accounted themselves in good luck. "The punishment of God," they said, "has come and is past. It was not so bad, after all."

So there were two parties again under Zedekiah, as there had been under Jehoiakim. Not only the princes and the priests but the prophets belonged to the Egyptian party, all except Jeremiah. They said that the power of the Chaldeans should soon cease, and the captives should return. Jeremiah made a yoke and put it on his neck and said in a great assembly, "This is the yoke of Nebuchadnezzar, which we and all the people of the earth must wear." But a prophet took the yoke from Jeremiah's neck and broke it.

Thus King Zedekiah rebelled against the Chaldeans, and Nebuchadnezzar came again. At first, the Jews tried to get the help of God by freeing

their brethren whom they held in slavery; but they took them back again. Jeremiah declared every day that Jerusalem would be taken, and the only wise course was to surrender. When the Chaldeans raised the siege for a little, being attacked by the Egyptians, Jeremiah started to go home to Anathoth. He was arrested at the gate and put in prison, and after that was thrown down into a well, which had only mud, however, and no water at the bottom. Out of this he was drawn up by a faithful friend. He continued, nevertheless, to declare the certain victory of the besiegers, until the tragic day came and verified his words. Nebuchadnezzar destroyed Jerusalem and again carried away a great captivity.

The Chaldeans treated Jeremiah with respect, but he chose to stay in the desolated land. There he was seized by his fleeing countrymen and carried into Egypt, where he is said to have died a martyr at their hands. Thus ended the long ministry of a brave man who never hesitated to rebuke vice no matter how powerful the sinner, and who never failed to be true to the convictions of his own conscience.

EZEKIEL

1. The prophet's call, 1–3.
2. Prophesies of destruction, 4–24.
    (1) The fall of Jerusalem, in symbols, 4–7.
    (2) The fall of Jerusalem, in visions, 8–11.
    (3) The fall of Jerusalem, in oracles, 12–24.
2. Prophecies concerning foreign nations, 25–32.
3. Prophecies of restoration, 33–39.
    (1) The new message, 33.
    (2) The new court, 34.
    (3) The new country, 35, 36.
    (4) The new people, 37.
    (5) The defeat of Gog, 38, 39.
4. The city of God, 40–48.
    (1) The holy temple, 40–43.
    (2) The holy worship, 44–46.
    (3) The holy land, 47, 48.

AMONG the leading citizens of Jerusalem who were carried by Nebuchadnezzar to Babylon at the time of his first invasion, was a young priest named Ezekiel. He settled with the others by the rivers of Babylon; that is, by the irrigation canals which watered the plains in which that city stood. He became the leader of the captives. As Isaiah was the great prophet of the Assyrian invasion

which destroyed the kingdom of Israel, and Jeremiah was the great prophet of the Chaldean invasion which destroyed the kingdom of Judah, so Ezekiel was the great prophet of the exile.

The first business of Ezekiel was to assure the people that Jerusalem should certainly be destroyed. They could not believe it. The city had, indeed, been taken, and they themselves had been brought away, but they were confidant of return. Daily they looked for some defeat of Babylon which should set them free. It was a part of their faith that Jerusalem was not only the holy city of their religion, but that God lived there, in the temple. In that day, the common belief was that each nation and land had its own God. "The Lord," the Jews said, "must preserve us His people, and Jerusalem His city, else what shall become of Him?"

The vision by which Ezekiel was called to be a prophet was one in which he saw the Lord sitting on a wheeled throne, and as he looked, the wheels began to turn and the throne began to move, and the Lord came away from the temple and the city and left them far behind. The vision meant that God was not confined to any place. "Even

though Jerusalem be destroyed," said Ezekiel, "our God is here with us."

Ezekiel taught, accordingly, that God intended to forsake Jerusalem. He reminded the exiles of the wickedness and idolatry against which Jeremiah was even then vainly preaching: idols of other gods standing in the temple, sacred chambers there with walls covered with painted reptiles and men swinging censers before them, women weeping for Tammuz, a Babylonian god of nature, men with their backs to the altar of the Lord, worshipping the sun. "To this," he said, "has religion come in the holy city, even in the temple! Must they not be destroyed?"

Thus passed ten years, and then the tragedy came. The temple and the city were destroyed, and over the long roads came the new companies of mourning captives to join their countrymen in Babylon. By the rivers of Babylon they sat down and wept when they remembered Zion. They hanged their harps upon the willows in the midst thereof. Their masters were not unkind, and wished to hear them sing their native songs, but they could not sing the Lord's song in a strange land.

Now. however, Ezekiel became the preacher of

hope and consolation. Jerusalem had been destroyed, but it should be rebuilded. Now the Second Isaiah sang the Lord's song, and though the land was strange the song was more filled with faith and music than any song had been before. Now, to keep in careful memory the manner of conducting the service of the temple, that record of ancient law was made which constitutes a great part of our book of Leviticus.

Now Ezekiel began to picture for the people the new time coming, when they should return to their own land, and the land should be more fertile and beautiful than in the days of their fathers, and the city should be greater and finer than before, and the temple should far exceed in glory all the splendors of the temple of Solomon. Even the Jordan should become a wide and mighty river, and the Dead Sea should become a lake of sweet water, filled with fish. Down should come, he said, the vast nations of the north, the wild armies of Gog, the king of Magog, and should assail the people of the Lord in the Lord's land, and so great should be their total defeat that even their broken bows and arrows should provide the people for seven years with firewood! Thus the restored people, pure from sin and forsaking all other gods

and keeping the law, should dwell in peace and plenty, blessed of God forever.

On these visions of Ezekiel the people lived all the dark time of the exile. And when as he promised they returned to their own country, they tried to realize them. They were no more a kingdom, nor have they been an independent nation since that day, but they became, as they are still, a church, a people held together by the faith and customs of their holy religion. This they owed to Ezekiel. In their darkest hour, he came and saved them.

OBADIAH, LAMENTATIONS, HAGGAI, ZECHARIAH

1. Obadiah. The Fall of Jerusalem; the Laughter of Edom.
   (1) The downfall of Edom predicted, 1:1–9.
   (2) The downfall of Edom justified, 1:10–21.
2. Lamentations; the Fall of Jerusalem; the Distress of Judah.
   (1) The desolation of Zion, 1.
   (2) The indignation of God, 2.
   (3) The grief of the poet, 3.
   (4) During the siege, 4.
   (5) After the siege, 5.
3. Haggai; the Rebuilding of the Temple; Exhortations
   (1) In the sixth month, (520), 1.
   The temple must be built.
   (2) In the seventh month, 2:1–9.
   The new shall exceed the old.
   (3) In the ninth month, 2:10–23
   a. To the people, promising prosperity.
   b. To the governor, promising protection.
4. Zechariah. The Rebuilding of the Temple. Visions.
   (1) Zechariah, 1–8.
   a. Visions of encouragement.
   b. Feasts for fasts.
   (2) Other prophets, 9–14.
   The Messianic Age.

THE fall of Jerusalem filled the hearts of the conquered and exiled people with anger and with sorrow. The one hundred and thirty-seventh psalm shows how they felt. They sat down and wept when they remembered Zion. But even greater than their grief was the hatred with which they remembered Edom, for the men of Edom had rejoiced over their misfortunes; they had stood by during the destruction of the city and had cried, "Down with it! down with it, even to the ground!"

These two feelings of anger and of sorrow, are expressed in two small books, the prophecy of Obadiah and the poem of Lamentations.

The book of Obadiah is against Edom. The holy city has been destroyed, amidst the laughter of the Edomites, but Obadiah declares that a like calamity shall befall them. "You dwell among the rocks," he says, "and exult like an eagle whose nest is among the stars; but the Lord shall bring you down. You stood by, even you, our kinsmen, when foreigners came upon us and destroyed us; you stood in the crossway to cut off our escape; but shall suffer for it, you shall be burned like stubble."

The book of Lamentations belongs properly

among the poems, for it is a little collection of psalms. The subject of the book is the fall of Jerusalem. "How doth the city sit solitary that was full of people! Judah is gone into captivity because of affliction, and because of great servitude: she dwelleth among the heathen, she findeth no rest." The poet confesses that the ruin of the city was the result of the sins of the people, and he prays the Lord for mercy. "Behold, O Lord, for I am in distress!" Jerusalem lies in the dust, and they who pass by say, "Is this the city that men called the perfection of beauty, the joy of the whole earth?" In the name of the distressed people, held in captivity in Babylon, the poet cries aloud, "Mine eye runneth down with water; mine eye trickleth down and ceaseth not, without any intermission. O Lord, thou hast seen my wrong, judge thou my cause."

Between the books of Obadiah and Lamentations concerning the destruction of the city in 586, and the books of Haggai and Zechariah concerning the restoration of the temple in 516, is a space of seventy years.

The exiles had returned in 536, but they had long delayed the rebuilding of their church. They had by no means realized the splendid vision of

Ezekiel. They had occupied themselves in the construction of their own houses, which they had erected on the ruins of the city. Zerubbabel the governor and Joshua the high priest had not been able to persuade the people to restore the temple. The walls of the sanctuary which Solomon had built lay upon the ground. It is likely that the ancient altar of sacrifice, made of the unhewn rock of the hill, was still held sacred, and that there the worship of the Lord was still maintained; but the temple lay in ruins.

Some of the people said, "We must build our houses first, we must have a roof over our heads." And that interested them so much that they forgot to build the church.

Some said, "The Samaritans stopped us when we began to build. They will come again and hinder us if we begin anew. We must wait till we are strong enough to fight them; or until the king of Persia sends soldiers to protect us."

Some said, "We must tarry till we have a leader. The Messiah, promised by Micah and Isaiah, by Jeremiah and Ezekiel, must first come."

Then arose Haggai and Zechariah and urged the people to begin at once.

Haggai addressed the high priest and the gov-

ernor, and told them that it was their duty to rebuild the Lord's house. When the people, in their discouragement, said, "We can never restore the temple to its old glories of the time of Solomon," he said, "The building may not be so fine, but the best part of a church is the spirit of those who worship in it. The Lord shall come to the new temple, and bring blessings with him."

Zechariah confirmed the word of Haggai. He said, "I saw the Lord's chariots and horses going up and down the earth, and reporting the peace and quiet of all nations, and I heard the word of the Lord saying, 'Now shall my house be built!'" He said, "I saw the great nations as four beasts with horns, and a carpenter sawing off their horns that they may do no more hurt with them." He said, "I saw a man with a measuring line laying out the plan of a new Jerusalem, whose walls are the fire of the Lord."

He encouraged Joshua, saying that God was on his side; and Zerubbabel, in whom he hoped to see the Messiah, long-expected. He said that the people were like a golden lamp, and that Joshua and Zerubbabel were like olive trees, one on each side, to supply the lamp with oil. He saw the sins of the people, written on a roll, flying away;

and the guilt of the people, as a woman put in a chest, carried off to Babylon.

He said that the fasts, which the people had kept in remembrance of the destruction of the temple, should now be changed to feasts. He looked for the near approach of Messiah's time when the whole land, with the new temple in the midst of it, should be filled with prosperity and grace.

Afterwards, other writings were attached to the paper on which the prophecy of Zechariah was written. These are contained in the ninth and following chapters. They speak of sins and distresses of the people, of enemies in Syria and Egypt, of a siege and capture of Jerusalem, and of the establishment of the reign of Messiah over all the earth. They are quite different from the earlier chapters, both in subject and in manner of writing. But by whom they were written, and when they were written, nobody knows. Perhaps in the second century before Christ when the Jews were contending with the Greeks.

MALACHI, JOEL, JONAH

1. Malachi. Concerning Indifference.
   (1) The offences of the people, 1:1–3, 12.
      a. In worship.
      b. In society and in business.
      c. In the withholding of offerings.
   (2) The day of the Lord, 3:13–4:6.
2. Joel. Concerning the Locusts and the Day of the Lord.
   (1) The prophet speaks 1–2:17.
      Locusts and famine; prayer and fasting.
   (2) The Lord answers, 2:18–3:21.
      a. Blessings, material and spiritual.
      b. The day of the Lord.
3. Jonah. Concerning Hatred of the Gentiles.
   (1) The evasion of Jonah, 1, 2.
      a. The disobedience of the prophet.
      b. The storm and the fish.
      c. The hymn of praise.
   (2) The Mission of Jonah, 3.
      a. The repentance of the people
      b. The disappointment of the preacher.

THE temple was rebuilt, but the people were not reformed. The urging of Haggai and Zechariah had led to the completion of the sanctuary, but on the day of the dedication the older men

had shed tears; partly because the new building was so inferior to the old, and because the people, with all their enthusiasm and shouting, cared so little for religion.

This indifference continued. The people, who had been so much more interested in building their houses than in building the Lord's house entered with little devotion into the new services. They brought for sacrifices the lambs which were not good for food, and the priests made no objection. They gave so little money that it was difficult to maintain the music and the dignity of the worship. And they said that, so far as they could see, God cared little whether they were good or bad. He blessed the wicked quite as much as the righteous.

This was the situation which was met by the prophet Malachi. His ministry was between that of Haggai and Zechariah, on one side, and that of Ezra and Nehemiah, on the other. He reproved the people for their indifference to the services of the temple, and for the smallness of their offerings. As for the complaint that God makes no difference between the evil and the good, "A day is coming," he said, "in which you shall see the hand of God. In that day, the good shall be rewarded and the

bad punished. The Lord shall come, and they who have been faithful to Him shall be blessed."

In the time of Joel, a hundred years after, it seemed as if the day of the Lord was indeed at hand. A fearful disaster is overtaking the people. The land is being desolated by what seems to be an invasion of locusts. "The vine is dried up, and the fig tree languisheth; the pomegranate tree, the palm tree also, and the apple tree, even all the trees of the field are withered." The day of the Lord is nigh at hand, "a day of darkness and of gloominess, a day of clouds and of thick darkness." The locusts are its heralds. "The land is as the garden of Eden before them, and behind them a desolate wilderness." Joel calls the people to repent and fast and pray. He promises that in answer to their grief and prayer the Lord shall drive away their enemies, and save them.

Then passes another century, and more, and the book of Jonah is addressed to a people who are again suffering affliction. Now the scourge is not the locusts and the famine, but the increased oppression of the Greeks. As the Persians followed the Chaldeans, so the Persians have been followed by the Greeks. The land lies under the oppression of the Gentiles. And, year by year,

this oppression embitters the mind of the people. Year by year, they hate the Gentiles more than before.

The Jews were a people with a divine mission. It was said at the beginning to Abraham that in his family all the nations of the earth should be blessed. The truth concerning the nature and the will of God which the Jews had was to be taught by them to all their neighbors. They were to make the whole world better. They were to save the nations out of their old idolatries, and to raise the standard of righteous living.

For a long time, as we have seen, the Jews were fully occupied in overcoming their own temptations to unrighteousness and to idolatry. They confessed that the destruction of their national life was the just result of their failure to keep the will of God. But when they were ready, after the exile, to enter at last upon their mission, and to teach the Gentiles the great lessons which they had learned, their sufferings, while they had improved their morals and their religion, had made them hate the people whom they might have taught. The book of Esther shows their bitter feeling.

The book of Jonah is about a foreign mission

conducted by a man who is filled with the spirit of that time. Jonah is sent to preach to Nineveh and he sets out in precisely the opposite direction; being told by God to go east to Assyria, he starts to go west to Spain. He takes a ship for Tarshish. There is a storm and a shipwreck and an adventure with a fish, and Jonah learns that when God tells him to do a thing, he must obey.

Thus Jonah goes to Nineveh and preaches. His sermon, in one sentence, is "Yet forty days and Nineveh shall be overthrown." Then he sits down on the side of a neighboring hill and waits for the appointed destruction. But in the meantime the people of Nineveh, moved by Jonah's preaching, repent, and the forty days pass and they are not destroyed. Then Jonah is very angry. He reproves God. "You have saved these miserable Ninevites," he says, "whom you promised to destroy." He is grieved to the heart that his mission has been successful. That was the least of his desires. He wished to see those Gentiles and all the other Gentiles struck with lightning. God reproves the angry prophet, and tells him—what the Jews of that age were forgetting—that all the people of the world are the sons and daughters of God.

DANIEL

1. Narratives, 1–6.
    1. The adventure of the king's meat.
    2. The king dreams of an image.
    3. The adventure of a fiery furnace.
    4. The king dreams of a tree.
    5. The adventure of the writing on the wall.
    6. The adventure of the den of lions.
2. Visions, 7–12.
    1. The first vision of the little horn.
    2. The second vision of the little horn.
    3. The vision of the seventy weeks.
    4. The vision of the contending angels.
    5. The vision of the abomination of desolation.

LOOKING back, now, over our long journey through the Old Testament, we see that we have been studying the history of about fifteen hundred years. The earlier dates are all uncertain, but it is a fair and convenient guess that Abraham was making his adventurous journey to Palestine about the year 1500 B. C. And we may be helped to remember it by reflecting that it was almost 1500 A. D., when Columbus was making his still more adventurous voyage to America.

Making a second guess, we may say that Moses

was bringing the Israelites out of Egypt and making a nation of them, about the year 1250.

It is a certain fact, without any guess, that David, with Saul before him and Solomon after him, was establishing the people as a kingdom about the year 1000.

Thus we have three easy dates: Abraham 1500, Moses 1250, David 1000.

Then, about 750, being just in the middle of our Old Testament history, we find Jeroboam II reigning in Israel, and Uzziah reigning in Judah and the Bible just begining to be gathered together out of ancient memories and records into the books which now compose it.

After that, the dates are certain and definite: the fall of the kingdom of Israel completed by the destruction of Samaria at the hands of the Assyrians, under Sargon, in 722; the fall of the kingdom of Judah completed by the destruction of Jerusalem at the hands of the Chaldeans, under Nebuchadnezzar, in 586; the exiled Jews permitted to return to their own land, in subjection to the Persians, under Cyrus, in 536.

The next important date is the conquest of the Persian empire by Alexander in 332. This brought the Jews under new masters, the Greeks. The

Greek period of Jewish history is not recorded in the books of the Bible which we commonly read, but in other books sometimes bound up with the Bible, but more often not, called the Apocrypha. The books of Maccabees in the Apocrypha tell how the Greeks oppressed the Jews. They add to the list of the foreign kings who ruled the Jews—Sargon the Assyrian, Nebuchadnezzar the Chaldean, and Cyrus the Persian—the name of Antiochus the Greek. In the days of this king, whose reign was ended only a little more than a hundred and fifty years before Christ, the book of Daniel was written.

The sufferings of the Jews under Antiochus the Greek were largely due to his determination to turn them all into Greeks. His plan was to change both their customs and their religion. He captured Jerusalem by attacking the city on a Sabbath day when the men would not fight. He placed a Greek altar—which the Jews called "the abomination of desolation"—on the altar of sacrifice. He burned the sacred books, wherever he could find them. He broke down the carved work of the temple with axes and hammers, and he tried to compel all the Jews to give up their worship of the Lord, under pain of death. Against him rose up the Maccabees

and succeeded at last in setting the people free. But they were only beginning their heroic struggle when the author of Daniel was writing his book. The storm was raging about them, and their hearts were failing them for fear. This book was written to console and encourage these grievously afflicted people.

Daniel, the hero of the book, is introduced to the reader in the first chapter as one of the Jewish exiles in Babylon. Nebuchadnezzar has been attracted to him, and has caused him to be educated, with three other Jewish youths, in his own court. One night, the king has a dream, and in the morning he has forgotten what it was. He calls his wise men and says, "Tell me what I dreamed last night, and then tell me what it meant." When they fail, Daniel comes forward. "You dreamed," he says, "of a great image, with head of gold, breast and arms of silver, body of brass, legs of iron, and feet of iron and clay. And a stone was thrown at the image which broke it into pieces, and the stone became a mountain. The image represents the kingdoms of the world, beginning with the Chaldean—the head of gold—and coming down to the Greek—the feet of iron

and clay; the stone is the kingdom of God, the nation of the Jews."

Nebuchadnezzar makes a golden image, to which all men must bow down, under penalty of being thrown into a fiery furnace. Daniel and his three companions will not bow, and are thrust into the furnace. But God protects them. They walk in the midst of the fire unharmed.

Then Nebuchadnezzar is humbled by being deprived of his reason, so that for seven years he eats grass like an ox. And Belshazzar, his successor, is humbled by the writing of a hand on the wall of his banquet hall declaring that he shall be overthrown. Daniel interprets the prophecy, and that night it is fulfilled.

The next king, Darius, is induced by enemies of Daniel to forbid all men for thirty days to make their prayers to any god or man except to the king himself, under penalty of being cast into a den of lions. Daniel kneeling at his open window towards Jerusalem, prays to the Lord in spite of the decree and is thrown to the lions. But God protects him; the mouths of the lions are stopped.

The purpose of these stories of heroism and faith is to assure the people that God will help them as He helped Daniel. As He saved Daniel from

Nebuchadnezzar and Darius, from flames and lions, so will He save the Jews from the power of Antiochus.

This assurance is repeated in a series of visions. It was a time when it was not safe to speak plainly, and call Antiochus by name. The writer spoke, accordingly, in symbols, which wise men would understand.

Daniel said, "I saw four beasts, and one had ten horns, and another little horn speaking proud things. And the Ancient of Days judged the little horn, and the beast was put to death. After that, the beasts being destroyed, the saints of the Most High possessed the earth." The beasts are the world-powers—Chaldean, Persians, Median and Greek. The ten horns are the ten generals among whom the kingdom of Alexander the Greek was divided. The little horn is Antiochus.

He said, "I saw a fight between a ram with two horns and a goat with one horn. The goat smote the ram and broke his horns. Then the goat's one horn grew into four, and out of one of them came a little horn raging against Judah and against God, destroying the temple." The ram is the Medo-Persian empire. The goat is the power of the

Greeks, whose horn is Alexander: the four horns are the four principal kingdoms which followed; the little horn is Antiochus.

He said, "The angel Gabriel told me that the seventy years of exile mean seventy weeks of years, *i. e.* seventy multiplied by seven. 'Then,' he said, 'there shall be great desolation in the city and the temple, and the sacrifice shall cease, but the end shall come soon'." When the Jews figured this out, they found that it was a promise of deliverance out of great tribulation in their own day. Only a few years more, and the oppressor should be overthrown.

Another vision of Daniel describes the long contention between the Greek kings of Egypt and the Greek kings of Syria, the rise of Antiochus in Syria, his unsuccessful invasion of Egypt, his persecution of the Jews. It promises the death of Antiochus and the coming of the Messianic Age. "Blessed is he that waiteth. Go thou thy way till the end be: for thou shalt rest, and stand in thy lot at the end of the days."

Thus the hearts of the afflicted people were encouraged, their expectation was directed to the coming of the great prince, the Messiah, who

should deliver them out of the hands of their oppressors, and make them again a great and happy people. They were in this expectation a hundred and fifty years after the book of Daniel, when Christ came at last.

NFW TESTAMENT

THE GOSPELS

MATTHEW, MARK, LUKE AND JOHN

Jordaens

THE GOSPELS

1. St. Mark.
   (1) The earliest gospel.
   (2) By a companion of St. Peter.
   (3) A narrative of events.
2. St. Matthew.
   (1) Mark's narrative of events, into which is inserted:
   (2) A report of the discourses of Jesus, by the apostle Matthew.
3. St. Luke.
   (1) Mark's narrative of events, into which is inserted:
   (2) A selection from the discourses of Jesus by the apostle Matthew, and also
   (3) A report of the discourses of Jesus from some other source; edited by a companion of St. Paul.
4. St. John.
   (1) The latest gospel.
   (2) An interpretation of the teaching and person of Jesus by the apostle John.

THE word Gospel means good news. The good news is that the Great Deliverer, the Messiah, promised by the prophets, has at last come. The four gospels are four accounts of His life and teaching.

A new part of the Bible begins with these books, because—with the book of Acts—they contain the history of a new revolution.

The Old Testament revolution, in the days of Rehoboam and Jeroboam, separated the Bible people into the kingdoms of Judah and of Israel. They were still, however, of one race and of one religion.

The New Testament revolution, in the days of Annas the high priest and Paul the apostle, separated the Bible people into two churches, Jewish and Christian, different in religion and in race.

The difference between the Bible people who continued to be Jews and the Bible people who became Christians began in a difference of belief concerning Jesus of Nazareth. The Christians believed that He was the Messiah, or, as they said in Greek, the Christ. The Jews did not believe it.

They did not believe it because He paid so little heed to some of their religious customs—their church rules—which He said did not help people to be truly religious. And they did not believe it because He showed no interest whatever in doing the thing which they thought the Christ, when He really came, would do: He seemed to have no intention to free His nation from their foreign rulers.

Indeed, His whole concern was to save people not from taxes or from Roman tyranny, but from their sins. And this concern He felt, not as regarded the Jews only, but as regarded all people, Jews and Gentiles.

Thus they were grievously disappointed when they found that He would not be their king; and they were alarmed when they found that His influence among the people tended to diminish their obedience to the law, and to break down the old distinction between Jews and Gentiles. Instead of accepting him as their Christ, long-expected and sent from God, they arrested Him, tried and condemned Him as a disturber of the public peace, and as making a false and blasphemous claim to be the Christ, and put Him to death upon a cross.

They who believed that He was indeed the Christ were confirmed in their faith by seeing Him alive after His death. In the strength of this faith, they went about declaring to all people that Jesus of Nazareth, who had been crucified, was the Christ, and that He had come to save not only Jews but Gentiles, and to save both Jews and Gentiles from their sins. This, they said, He was able to do because God was in Him, and His words

were the very truth of God. "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself." At last, in the life and teaching of Jesus Christ, we know of a certainty, they said, the love of God and the will of God; we may have, if we will, the help of God here, and the eternal blessing of God hereafter.

This is the good news which gives to these accounts of the life of Christ a name so full of hope and joy. They contain the gospel of Salvation.

Of the four gospels, the first to be written in its present form was probably that of St. Mark. This is mainly a record of the deeds of Christ, rather than of His words. It tells how He went about doing good. It describes particularly how He looked; what indignation there was in His face one time when He saw that the church people cared more to have their rules kept than to have a sick man cured; what courage He showed as He started to go to Jerusalem to meet His enemies, so that they who walked behind Him in the road were amazed to see Him. Thus, although we are not told much that He said, the accounts of what He did are so clear that they seem to be given by one who was present with Him.

St. Mark's gospel contains no reference to the writer. He did not sign it with his name. It is

called the gospel according to St. Mark because the early Christians believed that St. Mark wrote it. They believed also that St. Mark knew what to write because St. Peter told him. That is the account of the making of this gospel which was accepted in the early church, and there is no reason to doubt it. Mark himself was probably too young to have been a disciple during the ministry of Jesus, but his mother's house in Jerusalem was a common meeting place for the disciples. It is possible that the Last Supper was eaten in its upper room. It is certain that St. Peter was there often. Mark was thus a young man who knew Peter and the apostles, the nephew of Barnabas, the companion on a missionary journey of Barnabas and Paul.

While Mark was thus writing down what Peter told him about the deeds of Christ—or perhaps earlier than that—an apostle, one of the twelve, St. Matthew, was making a record of His words. He was preserving for his own use and for the good of others what he remembered of the sermon on the mount, and of the parables of Jesus, and of the other teaching to which he had listened. The language which Jesus spoke is called Aramaic, and was the form of Hebrew which was then used in

Palestine. In this language, Matthew made his record. This again, like the authorities of the gospel of St. Mark, is reported by the early Christians. It is stated plainly by a second-century writer named Papias.

The gospel according to St. Matthew, as we have it, differs in two respects from the work of Matthew: it has been translated into Greek; and the translator, or somebody else, has added to it nearly all of the gospel according to St. Mark. What we have, therefore, in this book is an account of the sayings of Jesus as recorded by Matthew, set here and there into the framework of the doings of Jesus as recorded by Mark.

The third gospel begins with a statement of the purpose and method of the writer. Presently, we find that the Acts of the Apostles begins in much the same way. Thus it is plain that these two books are from the same hand. The ancient and general belief is that the writer was St. Luke, who was a companion of St. Paul. Matthew was an apostle, and wrote what he heard with his own ears. Mark wrote what he was told by Peter who saw with his own eyes. Luke is somewhat farther removed from the events which he describes, for of these things even Paul could not inform him of

his own experience. So Luke says at the beginning of his gospel that he went about the making of his book in the manner of all good writers of history; he read whatever he could find written, and asked questions of all who had original knowledge.

One of the books which he read was the gospel of St. Mark, for he makes it the framework of his writing, as Matthew did. Probably he read also the gospel of St. Matthew, for we have in many places the words of Jesus reported just as Matthew reported them. In addition to these two sources, he had a third, for his chapters from the ninth to the eighteenth contain sayings and doings of Jesus which are not found in either Mark or Matthew.

In the first three gospels the order of events is mostly the same, being derived from St. Mark. The scene is Galilee, with little about Jerusalem except at the end. Jesus is heard speaking in brief, plain sentences. In the fourth gospel the order of events is different, no use being made of St. Mark. The scene is almost entirely in Jerusalem. Jesus is heard speaking in long, mystical sentences. This gospel bears the name of St. John.

Two things are clear about the gospel of St.

John. One is that the report of the sayings of Jesus is made in much the same manner of writing as is found in John's epistles. That means that the author has recorded what Jesus said not always in the actual words of Jesus, but often in his own words. The other fact is that not all of the gospel was written by St. John; the last two verses, for example, are not by him but about him. The fourth gospel is probably related to St. John as the first gospel is related to St. Matthew. The heart of the first gospel is Matthew's remembrance of the public teaching of Jesus; the heart of the fourth gospel is John's remembrance of the private teaching of Jesus. To each of these gospels other good men contributed such additions as they were able to make.

The first three are narrative gospels; they contain accounts of what Jesus said and did. The fourth is an interpretive gospel; long after the crucifixion and the resurrection, as the person and work of Jesus were seen more clearly in the light of thought and prayer, the disciple who knew Him best declared their inner meaning. He tried to impart to us the faith in Christ as the Son of God which filled his soul.

Rembrandt

ST. MATTHEW

THE MINISTRY OF CHRIST: FIRST YEAR

Matthew 1–4, Mark 1:14, Luke 1–3, John 1–3.

1. The birth and childhood of Jesus.
   (1) The angel and the forerunner, Luke 1:1–25, 57–80.
   (2) The angel and the Virgin Mother, Luke 1:26–56.
   (3) The angels and the shepherds, Luke 2:1–40
   (4) The visit of the Wise Men, Matthew 2.
   (5) The visit to the temple, Luke 2:41–52.
2. The first year of the ministry.
   (1) The preaching of John the Baptist, Matthew 3.
   (2) The baptism of Jesus, Matthew 3:13–17.
   (3) The temptation, Matthew 4:1–11.
   (4) The first disciples, John 1:35–51.
   (5) The wedding at Cana, John 2:1–12.
   (6) The expulsion of the traders, John 2:13–25.
   (7) The interview with Nicodemus, John 3:1–21.

THE Romans were now the rulers of Palestine. The revolt of Judas Maccabeus against the Greek kings of Syria had won for the Jews only a brief liberty; but the oppression of the Greeks was never again so heavy as in the days of Antiochus

when the book of Daniel was being written. In the sixty-third year before the birth of Christ, almost exactly a hundred years after the book of Daniel came to the rescue of the faith of the Jews, and the battles of Maccabeus came to the rescue of their freedom, the Roman general Pompey conquered Syria. He captured Jerusalem. He entered the temple, and made his way into the Holy of Holies, expecting to discover there some strange idol and was amazed to find it empty. Thus the Romans came into control.

When Christ was born, Herod was called the king of the Jews, but he ruled only by permission of the Romans. The master of Palestine, and of all the countries which lay about the Mediterranean Sea, was Caesar Augustus.

The birth of Christ is connected by St. Luke with the taking of a Roman census. This enrollment brought down from Nazareth of Galilee to Bethlehem of Judea a descendant of David, named Joseph, with Mary his wife. The family of Joseph was better than his fortunes, for he was a poor man who earned his living by the trade of a carpenter. Thus, however, was fulfilled the prophecy of Micah that the Great Deliverer should come not from the rich, the powerful, the dwellers in courts and

Hofmann

THE NATIVITY

cities, but from the plain people: he should be like David, when he came to the throne of Israel from the pasture where he tended the sheep. In David's own town, and in the lineage of David, Jesus Christ was born.

The gospels tell how an angel announced to His mother that her son should be the Saviour of His people, and how when He was born the angels sang in the sky over the fields where shepherds watched their flocks. But when the shepherds came to see the child, they found Him cradled in a manger. Joseph and Mary had come to Bethlehem in such a crowded time that there was no room for them at the inn, and thus the child was born in a stable.

St. Matthew's gospel says that out of the east came men who followed a star until it brought them to the child in Bethlehem, to whom they gave gifts, gold and frankincense and myrrh. This so aroused the fear of Herod, lest a new king should claim his throne, that Joseph and Mary took the child and fled to Egypt.

St. Luke's gospel says that when at last they returned to Nazareth, the child increased in wisdom and stature and in favor with God and man.

One time, when He was twelve years old, He went with His parents to Jerusalem to the Passover. On their return, with a caravan of their Nazareth neighbors, they looked for Him at the end of the first day's journey, and when they could not find Him they went back to Jerusalem. There they found Him in the temple, listening to the teachers of the law of God, and asking them questions.

Nothing else is told us of His life up to the beginning of His ministry, but this is enough to show us that the lad was both friendly and studious. It was not thought strange that He should be absent a whole day with His "kinsfolk and acquaintance," *i. e.* with his boy companions. He thought it strange, however, that when they sought Him they did not look first in the temple, knowing that there they would be most likely to find Him. His spirit was at the same time social and serious. He spoke, one day, of the games which they used to play in the Nazareth streets, where they pretended to be at a wedding or at a funeral, with wedding music and funeral mourning, and how some children refused to play at all: He was not of that kind. But it is plain that His deeper interests were in books,—the histories and poems and prophecies which are bound together

now in the Old Testament. These He read, and thought upon, and learned by heart.

Joseph seems to have died during this time, for there is no more mention made of him. In that case, Jesus by His daily labor as a carpenter would have the responsibility of the family support. There were four brothers, named James and Joseph and Simon and Judas, and two or three sisters.

The ministry of Christ, with which the gospels of St. Mark and St. John begin, is divided in St. John's gospel into three parts, by the mention of three celebrations of the Passover.

Jesus was called from the carpenter's bench to the ministry by the preaching of John the Baptist. John was a cousin of Jesus, his mother Elizabeth being a kinswoman of Jesus' mother Mary. His father was a priest named Zacharias. He had early devoted himself to the special service of God, and had gone to live in the wilderness to prepare his soul by prayer and fasting. More and more it was made clear to him, in his long solitary days, that the time must be at hand when the Great Deliverer should come. He thought of the sins and sorrows of the people. He saw them under the power of the Romans, ruled by princes and priests

such as those who had stirred the indignation of the old prophets. Augustus had been followed on the throne of the Roman world by Tiberius. The Herod of the time of Jesus' birth was dead, but Herod his son was the ruler of Galilee and Pontius Pilate was the ruler of Judea.

Jesus was thirty years old when John began to preach. John stood by the river Jordan, dressed like Elijah, in a cloak of camel's skin, and spoke of their sins, to all who came to hear him. Publicans came, who collected the Roman taxes; soldiers came, who kept the Roman rule over the people; Pharisees came, who taught the law of God in meeting-houses called synagogues; Sadducees came, who conducted the worship of God in the temple; wise and unwise, good and bad, they came; and to them all John spoke with great plainness. "I am not the Christ," he said, when they asked him if he was himself the Great Deliverer. "But the Christ is at hand. Even now He stands unknown among you." He told them that in order to be able to know Christ and follow Him they must repent of their sins, and those who repented he washed in the river, baptizing them as a sign that they had clean hearts. Thus he was called John the Baptist.

Among those who came to hear this preacher was Jesus. As he listened, a new light shone in His soul. A voice spoke which He alone heard. The voice said, "Thou art the Son of God." He knew that that meant that He was to be the deliverer long-expected, the Saviour of the people. As He was baptized, the sky shone above Him, and the blessing of God came upon Him.

After that, He returned no more to the trade of the carpenter. He saw that He was called to a different kind of work. Immediately, He went away into a desert place, and there spent many days considering this great matter, and making ready for His new duties. He determined to give Himself wholly to this ministry, without thinking of His own interests, or providing for His own needs. "I might turn stones into bread," He said, "to feed myself, but I will not." He determined to go about His mission quietly, relying on the truth rather than on any signs from the sky. "I might compel men to believe in me," He said, "by casting myself from the roof of the temple, and coming down into the midst of the people, carried on the wings of angels, but I will not." He determined to make no compromise, to use no force nor pretense, to take no account of what the people

liked, but to tell them plainly the will of God, whether they liked it or not. "I might make alliance with the devil," He said, "and thus gain all the kingdoms of the world and the glory of them, but I will not." Having made these important principles perfectly plain to Himself, He came out, and began His ministry.

He gathered about Him a little group of faithful friends: first two fishermen from the Lake of Galilee, Andrew and Peter, who had come down, like Jesus, to hear John the Baptist preach. These He found when He came out of the desert. With them He returned to Galilee, and found two more disciples, James and John, partners of Andrew and Peter. After these, two others joined the company, Philip and Nathaniel.

Nathaniel lived in Cana, near Nazareth. Neither Nazareth nor Cana was far distant from the lake. It is likely that Jesus knew all of those young men before. Thus, when there was a wedding in Cana, they were all invited, and they went together. It is interesting to remember that the first occasion to which Christ took His disciples was this cheerful festivity. It shows how He entered into natural life, not holding Himself apart. He came not like John the Baptist dwelling

in the wilderness, and wearing a strange dress, but, as He had determined, like other men, quietly and informally, increasing the joy of life. At the wedding in Cana, St. John says, He changed water into wine. This passes our understanding, but we can understand well enough that such an act was a symbol of all His purpose, to make the most common life as rich as the rarest wine.

Then came the Passover, and He went to Jerusalem. Herod the Great had rebuilt the temple, making it splendid again, as in the days of Solomon. Indeed, the court about it was twice as large as it had been before. But this court was now a scene of disorder. At the time of the Passover it was changed to a great market. In booths on all sides men were selling sheep and oxen and doves for sacrifice, and changing Roman money into Jewish that it might be paid into the temple treasury. It was a place not of prayer but of merchandise.

Against this profanation Jesus protested. It was His first public act. He showed Himself to the people as one who stood for God against wrongdoing. He took a whip of small cords and drove the traders out. It was at once plain, however, that neither the rulers not the people were inclined to join themselves to this new prophet, or to take

His part in reforming public abuses. The traders were very angry; the rulers, who profited by the traffic in the temple, while they did not venture to arrest Him, showed that they resented His interference. The people seem to have applauded Him, but not very heartily.

Only one man is remembered to have sought out Jesus, and to have shown some disposition to become a disciple. His name was Nicodemus, and he was a very important person indeed, being a member of the Sanhedrin, the senate of the Jews. But he wished to keep his discipleship secret, and Jesus would not receive him on those terms. Jesus said that if Nicodemus really wished to be His disciple, he must so change his whole life that it would be like being born again.

Thus closed the first period of the ministry of Christ. He withdrew from Jerusalem and returned to Galilee.

THE MINISTRY OF CHRIST: SECOND YEAR

Matthew 5:1–15:20, Mark 1:15–7:22, Luke 4:1–9:17, John 4–6.

1. The ministry of mercy.
   (1) The sample day, Mark 1:21–39.
   (2) The man with the palsy 2:1–12.
   (3) The man with the withered hand 3:1–6.
   (4) The man with the legion 5:1–19.
   (5) The ruler's daughter 5:21–43.
2. The ministry of truth.
   (1) Among the Samaritans, John 4.
   (2) The Sermon on the Mount, Matthew 5–7.
   (3) The Sermon of Parables, Matthew 13.
   (4) The Crisis at Capernaum.
      a. The miracle, the sermon, the desertion of the disciples, John 6.
      b. The opposition of the Pharisees, Matthew 15:1–20.

THE Holy Land, in the time of Christ, was in three main divisions. In the south was Judea, in the place of the old kingdom of Judah; in the middle was Samaria, in the place of the old kingdom of Israel; in the north was Galilee. Thus when Jesus, after the first Passover, went from

Judea into Galilee, He passed through Samaria. He might have taken another road on the other side of the Jordan, through the Jewish district of Perea. But the Samaritan road was more direct.

For many years, the Jews had had no dealings with the Samaritans. These people were descended from ancestors who were half Jew and half Assyrian. As we have seen, the Jews who returned from the exile, pure in blood and in religion, declined to accept their friendship. Thus they became enemies. When the Jews wished to call a man a particularly mean name, they called him a Samaritan.

Christ began the second year of His ministry by disregarding this old prejudice. He walked up through Samaria, stopped to rest at Jacob's well, near Shechem, talked there with a Samaritan woman, and stayed for two days in that town. This was very different from the common spirit of hatred for all foreign people, such as we found in the books of Esther and of Jonah.

The district of Galilee had no place in the Old Testament. Even so late as a hundred years before Christ, it was inhabited mostly by Gentile people—Canaanites, who still held the lands of their forefathers; Syrians, who had come in when

Damascus was destroyed; Arabs from the eastern deserts; and Greek settlers, who had followed the armies of Alexander. This land the Jews conquered in 104 B. C. and the people became Jews in their manners and customs and religion. Galilee had on the east the Phoenician country of Tyre and Sidon, down to Mt. Carmel, and on the west the Jordan and the Sea of Galilee, and it extended on the south to the river Kishon which ran through the Great Plain. Here was Nazareth, overlooking the plain; Cana was a few miles north of Nazareth. The whole district was only about thirty miles from east to west, and forty miles from north to south. About twenty miles from Nazareth, on the northern shore of the Sea of Galilee, was the chief town of the province, Capernaum.

Returning now to this country in which He had been brought up, He settled in Capernaum, and in that place and in the near neighborhood He spent the whole of the second year.

The record of one sample day shows what a crowded year it was. It was a Sabbath, and He spent the morning, according to His custom, in the synagogue. There was a man in the congregation who had an evil spirit; he was what we call

a crazy man. Jesus rebuked the evil spirit, and the man was cured; his better self got the control of his will. After the service Jesus went to dine at the house of Peter and Andrew, taking James and John with him, and finding Peter's wife's mother sick in bed, having a fever, He laid His hand upon her, and immediately the fever left her. That evening at sunset, the street before the house was filled with people who had brought their sick that He might heal them, and He healed many. Thus passed that busy day, and many others like it.

Thus Christ had power to heal the sick. Wherever He went, the blind and lame and mute and deaf, those who were palsied in their limbs and those who were diseased in mind, even the lepers, were brought to Him. This, however, was not His main interest. Concerned as He was for the sick in body, He was far more concerned for the sick in soul. He saw that the worst thing in the world is not pain, but sin. Thus, although His pity led Him to use His singular healing power, He often did so in private, and told those who were healed not to talk about it. He was unwilling to be thought of merely as a doer of wonders or to be followed by a crowd of curious persons. Some-

times He was so pursued by such crowds that He kept away from towns, and went into the quiet country.

Even when he healed the sick, He did so not as in the fairy stories by a touch of a magic wand, but by an appeal to the will and faith of those who needed healing. They must help Him or else He could do nothing. One time He went to Nazareth and preached in the synagogue whose services He had attended since His childhood. But the people who had known Him all those years could not believe that their old neighbor, whom they had employed to mend their chairs and tables, and by whose side they had done their work and lived their lives, was a Great Person. They could not think of Him as a prophet, and they did not dream that He was the Christ. They said, however, "Let us see if He can do here some of those wonders which He is reported to have done in Capernaum. Let us see if He can work a miracle." But being thus asked to work a miracle to prove His greatness, in the face of the disbelief of the people, He could do no mighty work among them. Then they were angry, and thrust Him out of the synagogue, and out of the town. Even his own brothers did not believe in Him, especially when He began

to do and say things which were quite different from the common custom and teaching of the day. They tried to stop Him, saying, "He is beside Himself."

Thus Jesus found Himself in the midst of those who did not understand Him. Some, indeed, began already to think that He might be the Christ, and that He might bring to pass that kingdom of God for which they prayed. But they desired a kingdom such as Judas Maccabeus had won from the Greeks, to be gained by a victorious army and to be ruled by princes sitting on thrones. They thought that Jesus might be able to bring in such a kingdom because He could do such mighty works.

Then one time Jesus went up on one of the hills beside Capernaum and spent the whole night in prayer, and in the morning when a great crowd met Him as He came down, He chose twelve of them to be His nearest friends, and called them apostles; meaning that He intended to teach them and send them out to teach others. And then, addressing the multitude, He told them His idea of the kingdom which Christ when He came would establish. He preached the sermon on the Mount.

You have the commandments, He said, but

you think you are keeping them well enough when you do not break them with your hands. The truth is that the commandments are truly obeyed only when they are obeyed in your hearts. Thus the words "Thou shalt not kill" are to be understood as forbidding every unbrotherly thought. And the words "Thou shalt not commit adultery" are to be understood not only as commanding men not to steal their neighbors' wives, but as forbidding every kind of impurity, even in the secret heart.

You have your religious customs, He said, almsgiving and prayer and fasting—but these are of no good in themselves. Their value depends on what they mean. If they are done to get the praise of men, they may get that, but nothing more. God praises only those whose alms and prayers and fasts are done for His own sake. God cares for the heart. You must have a better righteousness, He said, than the people whose goodness is only a church goodness, and consists in attending services and offering sacrifices and keeping the customs of religion. The true goodness consists in loving our neighbors, even in loving our enemies, in serving those who are in need, and in living in the thought of the presence of God.

Another time, beside the Sea of Galilee, He preached a Sermon of Parables. He said that the kingdom of Heaven is the most precious thing in the world, like a priceless pearl; and that though the true idea of it is now held by a few humble people yet it shall grow like a mustard seed; and that this growth shall be as quiet a progress as the working of the yeast in the meal; and that, all along, many shall misunderstand it and refuse to accept it. See that man, He said, as He scatters the grain; some falls on the hard path, and the birds eat it; some falls among weeds and they choke it; some falls on the shallow soil and withers because it has no root; some falls on good ground, and brings forth a good harvest. It is like the preaching of the kingdom of God.

As the year drew to a close, and the time of the Passover came again, Jesus heard that John the Baptist had been put to death. He had rebuked Herod for taking his brother's wife, and Herod had put him in prison, and at last, urged by his wife, had caused him to be beheaded. It showed what a true prophet might expect. Jesus took the twelve, and went across the Sea of Galilee to a quiet place, where they might rest and where He might have time to think. To this place there

came a great crowd, whom He first taught and then fed with loaves and fishes. Among these men, seeing the mighty power of Jesus, a great cry arose calling Him to be their king. "Come," they cried, "and lead us against Herod and against Rome. Your life is in peril; Herod will kill you as he has killed John. Come, begin the kingdom of God here, with us."

When He refused this demand, and the next day in the synagogue preached a long sermon in which He said a great deal about God and nothing about Cæsar, and showed plainly that the Kingdom of God for which He was working was a kingdom not of conquest nor of worldly power but of the truth, they were greviously disappointed. From that time, the number of His disciples decreased. A great multitude turned back and walked no more with Him. He feared for a moment that even the twelve would go away, but they were loyal in the midst of the great desertion.

At the same time, the religious teachers and leaders, especially those of Jerusalem, set themselves in opposition to Him.

Indeed, He had first set Himself in opposition to them. In addition to the old simple rule of doing no work on the Sabbath, they had made a

hundred rules about the keeping of the day, which made it a burden rather than a rest and joy. These rules He disregarded. Also, to their distinctions between things clean and things unclean, He paid no attention. For example, when they came in from the street they washed their hands, not to get them clean as we do, but to wash off bad luck. This He declined to do. As for food, He said that men are defiled not by eating any special kinds of meat, but by saying bad or unkind or untrue words. On account of such teaching, they held that He was a breaker of the laws of religion.

Now there was a belief among the people that if once the law was perfectly kept all the promises of the Old Testament would be fulfilled; the Jews would immediately become a great and rich and prosperous nation. They reasoned in this way: they said, "We are the special people of God, and the special people of God ought to be blessed with all good things, but we are not blessed with all good things, something therefore must be the matter. What is it which withholds the blessing of God? It is our disobedience to the law." And by the law they meant not only what was written in the Bible, but all their added rules. Thus a breaker of the laws of religion, and especially one

who was encouraging the people to break the laws, was a public enemy. The Pharisees, who had this belief about the law, accounted Jesus as a public enemy. They talked about killing Him.

Thus it came to pass that as the Passover time approached, and people began to start out for Jerusalem, Christ took His apostles and went in quite a different direction. It was not only unsafe for Him to go to Jerusalem, but even in Galilee His life was in danger. With His followers fallen away, and His enemies daily increasing He left Galilee and sought safety for a time among the Gentiles.

THE MINISTRY OF CHRIST: THIRD YEAR

Matthew 15:2–28:20, Mark 7:23–16:20, Luke 9:18–24:53, John 7–21.

1. In the neighborhood of Tyre and Sidon, Mark 7:24–30.
2. In the neighborhood of Caesarea Philippi.
   (1) The Confession, Matthew 16:13–23.
   (2) The Transfiguration, Matthew 17:1–21.
3. In the Decapolis, Mark 7:31–37, Matthew 15:29 32.
4. In Perea, Luke 9:51–18:34.
   (1) The sending of the seventy, 10.
   (2) The parables of the Good Samaritan (10), the Prodigal Son (15), the Rich Man and Lazarus (16).
5. In Jerusalem.
   (1) At the Feast of Tabernacles, John 7, 8.
   (2) At the Feast of Dedication, John 9, 10.
6. The raising of Lazarus, John 11.
7. The Holy Week.
   (1) The entry into Jerusalem.
   (2) The days of teaching.
   (3) The Last Supper.
   (4) The prayer and arrest in the garden.
   (5) The trial before Caiphas and Pilate.
   (6) The crucifixion.
   (7) The resurrection.

THE third and last year of the ministry of Christ was spent, for the most part, outside of either Judea or Galilee. He was in the lands to the north. in the neighborhood of Tyre and Sidon and in the neighborhood of Cæsarea Philippi. He was in the lands to the east, in the Decapolis and in Perea. St. John, in his gospel, reports two visits to Jerusalem.

Leaving Galilee, Jesus went first toward Tyre and Sidon. His purpose was not only to escape for a time from His enemies, but to get opportunity for long and quiet talks with His disciples. He saw that the days of His own life were numbered; it was plain to Him that He must presently meet the fate of John the Baptist. He wished, therefore, to prepare the twelve to carry on His work. Thus they walked over the high hills and through the long valleys. Stopping, however, one day, to rest in that strange land, He was recognized by a woman who was in great trouble. Either she had seen Him before, or, more likely, there was something uncommonly fine and noble in His appearance. He could not be hid. She begged Him, therefore, to heal her daughter. But He hesitated. The woman was a heathen. She believed in Baal and Astarte, the gods of the Canaanites; or in

Zeus and Ares and Athene, the gods of the Greeks. The ministry of Christ had thus far been only to people of the Bible religion. His plan was not to go about and preach the gospel to a great many people, speaking once or twice in a place, but rather to teach a few people thoroughly, thus giving the truth a strong root from which to grow. It was His prayer that the Old Testament people, being first persuaded, might then teach the world. Thus the woman's cry called Him to change His plan. He stopped to think—then He turned to her in compassion and healed her child.

North of Galilee, at the source of the Jordan, was the city of Caesarea Philippi. It was named in part for Augustus Caesar, in whose honor it was built, and in part for Philip, a brother of Herod of Galilee, who built it. Situated in the midst of the mountains and at the beginning of the river, the place had been held sacred from the earliest times. The Canaanites had a shrine there. There the Israelite tribe of Dan had made a sanctuary. The Greeks had consecrated it to Pan, their god of nature. The Romans had erected there a statue to Augustus, their god of the state. As Christ and the twelve passed that way, He said to them, "Whom do men say that I am?" And

when they answered that some said that He was Elijah or one of the old prophets come to life again, He said, "Whom say ye that I am?" Peter answered, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the Living God." Thus, in that place of many religions, there was spoken aloud for the first time the truth on which the Christian religion is founded. "On this rock," Christ said, "I will build my church." On the rock of the loyalty of the men who believed in Him when other disciples had fallen away, and on the rock of the truth which they believed. He told them plainly that He was indeed the Christ, who had come to save the world.

A few days after, taking three of the disciples, He climbed a neighboring hill and spent the night in prayer. They saw Him as He prayed. So exalted was His spirit, so conscious of the divine presence, so directly did He speak to God, that when they described it afterwards, they said, "He was transfigured. His face shone as the sun. Moses and Elijah stood beside Him, and God spoke from the sky." Then sleep, as a thick cloud, fell upon them. In the morning, He brought them down and resumed His ministry of mercy; but from that time He spoke again and

again of the tragedy which lay before Him. "I must go to Jerusalem," He said, "and there be seized by priests and scribes, and be put to pain, and at last be killed."

The Decapolis was a district of ten cities, east of the Jordan. It had been taken into possession by the Greeks in the days of Alexander, and though now under the rule of the Romans, it was still inhabited by Greeks. The buildings were Greek, the language was Greek, the religion was Greek. Near Gadara, one of the ten cities, Jesus had healed a man who had, he said, a whole legion of devils in him. Jesus had cast them out; and the man had published this wonder throughout all Decapolis. Coming now again into this country, they brought to Him a deaf-and-dumb man, and He healed him. And great multitudes came to Him—heathen people like the woman of the district of Tyre and Sidon—having with them the lame and the blind, and the dumb, and the maimed, and cast them down at Jesus' feet, and He healed them. And they glorified the God of Israel. Thus He showed them the truth of the true religion not by arguing with them but by doing good to them.

South of Decapolis was Perea. There He came

again into a country of the Jews. From Tyre, a city of Phoenicians, from Caesarea a city of Romans, from Decapolis a land of Greeks, He returned to His own people. He entered there upon a mission about which we know little, except that He prepared for it by sending seventy disciples to make ready for Him. For a time, crowds followed Him as before. St. Luke has preserved for us a record of some of His Perean teachings. He spoke much in parables. To the parables of the kingdom, which He had given His disciples in Galilee, He added, in Perea, the parables of the brotherhood, teaching a love and service which took no account of either race or religion: the Good Samaritan. the Prodigal Son, the Rich Man and Lazarus.

It was perhaps during this Perean residence that He made the two visits to Jerusalem which are described in the gospel of St. John. The feast of Tabernacles came about the time of our Thanksgiving Day, and commemorated both the journey of the Hebrews through the wilderness in the days of Moses, and the gratitude of the people year by year for the harvests of the land. The feast of the Dedication came about the time of our Christmas Day, and commemorated the restoration of the

temple by Judas Maccabeus. In the midst of the people assembled at these feasts, Jesus spoke concerning Himself. He said little in regard to His being the Christ. His words were now far wider in their meaning. He went beyond the idea of fulfilling their expectation of a Great Deliverer who should devote Himself mainly to the good of the Jews, and spoke of Himself as the Savior of all men. "I am the light of the world," He said. He spoke sentences of deep mystery: "I and my Father are one." This the Jews understood to be a claim to a nature more than human, to a kinship with God. Twice, therefore, they took up stones to kill Him; but He still escaped alive.

At last, the Passover came again. He must present Himself in Jerusalem for one final effort to change the minds and lives of the people. He must tell them again that the true kingdom of God consists not in the reign of any king but in obedience, of hand and heart, to God's commandments. He must try again to bring them out of their narrowness of race and religion into a common brotherhood of all men. He must endeavor again to show them that the life of the spirit consists not in the keeping of a thousand rules but in the freedom of the love of God. He knew well

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THE PARABLE OF THE PRODIGAL SON

that this would set the church so bitterly against Him that His life would be the price which He must pay for His plain speech. For what He demanded was the reformation of the church, and the church was unwilling to be reformed. But speak He must.

Thus He came down along the road which ran through Perea; He crossed the Jordan near Jericho, and went up through the rocky hills toward Jerusalem. He spent a night at Bethany. In the morning, He went into the city, riding an ass, which in the old times was accounted more royal than the horse. Thus, for a moment, the hope arose again that He would offer Himself to all the discontented in Israel as their king against the Romans. At the sight, however, of Jerusalem, He wept over it, and foretold its certain destruction, and it was plain that He had no plan to save the city. Thus, again, His followers were bitterly disappointed.

For several days He taught in the temple. He spoke His mind regarding the religion of the place, and delivered His message in the ears of the priests and the scribes. There were still so many people with Him that the rulers did not dare to take Him publicly. At last, one of His own dis-

ciples, Judas Iscariot, offered for money to bring them to Him in a quiet place where He might be arrested without tumult. As the feast of the Passover came, He ate the Paschal Supper with the twelve. At that time He took bread and broke it, and poured wine into a cup, and these He gave to them saying "This is my body, this is my blood; do this in remembrance of me."

After that, as He was praying in the garden of Gethsemane, Judas, who had gone from the supper to the priests, led a band of soldiers and servants who seized and bound Him and carried Him away. All the disciples fled. Thus He was brought before the council of the Jewish church and people, meeting in the night. There He declared plainly that He was the Christ, the Son of God. He was condemned to death, and brought before Pilate to be sentenced. Pilate found no fault in Him, but there was now a mob of people clamoring for His crucifixion, until Pilate was frightened. He scourged Jesus, hoping that that would be enough, but the sight of His blood only enraged them the more. Standing before them, having on His shoulders a scarlet robe and on His head a crown of thorns, in contempt of His claim

to be the true king of the Jews, they cried out, "Crucify him! Crucify him!"

So He was crucified. They led Him out of the city to a place of execution, nailed His hands and feet to a cross, and left Him there to die. The day was Friday, the time was nine o'clock, at three o'clock He died. Thus was ended, as it seemed, a life of failure. He had come upholding high ideals and trying to get them realized, teaching the truth of God, God Himself being with Him and in Him, and not only the people but the ministers of the church had refused to heed Him. The church had put Him to death.

But that was only the beginning. On Sunday a rumor spread among the disciples that He was alive. Some of them going out in the early morning, found the grave empty. Some came back reporting that they had seen visions of angels declaring that He was risen from the dead. Presently, Peter saw Him. That afternoon, two disciples going to a village near Jerusalem were joined by a mysterious person whom at last they recognized as Jesus; and when they knew Him, He vanished out of their sight. That evening the whole company of the apostles—except Judas, who had hanged himself, and Thomas, who was

absent,—saw Him face to face. He had indeed arisen, and was alive, as He said, forevermore. A week later, Thomas also saw Him and fell at His feet crying, "My Lord and my God!" These appearances continued for a month and more. They made it plain to the disciples that their Master was alive. Returning thus to life after His death upon the cross, they were made certain that He was indeed the Christ, as He had said. And gradually, more and more, as He appeared and disappeared with words of blessing, and at last ascended into Heaven, they began to perceive that He was more than the Christ, more than the Great Deliverer for whom the nation prayed, more than man. They began to see that in Him God Himself had visited them, and taught them, and lived amongst them. They began to see that the life and death of Jesus had been a revelation of the love and will of God.

After *Rubens*

THE DESCENT FROM THE CROSS

THE NEW TESTAMENT

THE ACTS

THE ACTS OF ST. PETER

Acts 1–8, 10–12.

1. The preparation for the Christian mission.
   (1) The days of waiting, 1.
   (2) The Day of Pentecost, 2.
2. The Christians and the rulers of the city.
   (1) First summons; after healing a lame man, 3, 4.
   (2) Second summons; after punishing liars, 5.
3. The Christians and the rulers of the synagogue.
   (1) The appointment of Stephen 6:1–8.
   (2) The speech of Stephen 6:9–7:53.
   (3) The stoning of Stephen, 7:54–60.
4. The mission of Philip.
   (1) To the Samaritans 8:1–25.
   (2) To the Ethiopian, 8:26–40.
5. The mission of Peter.
   (1) To Lydda and Joppa, 9:31–43.
   (2) To Caesarea: Cornelius the centurian, 10, 11.
   The baptism of Gentiles.

THE book of the Acts of the Apostles is an account, for the most part, of the ministry of two men, St. Peter and St. Paul. It describes the beginning of the Christian Church in Jerusalem, and its extension outside of Jerusalem, as far as Rome.

The resurrection of Christ had filled the hearts of the disciples with such faith in Him that they had high hopes of convincing all their brethren. When the Feast of Penticost came, a commemoration of the giving of the law on Sinai, and a thanksgiving for the wheat harvest, they were made so aware of the presence and blessing of God that the room in which they prayed seemed filled with the sound of a mighty wind and tongues of fire appeared upon their heads. Down they came, then, into the streets and began to speak. At first, their excitement and enthusiasm and joy was such that they spoke in sounds rather than in words, yet in such a manner that men of every language understood that something very extraordinary had happened to them. Then Peter spoke in the common language which they all knew, and declared that Jesus whom they had crucified was the Christ who should save the nation and the world.

The rulers, finding that this preaching attracted a great crowd, and fearful of a public disturbance, put the apostles into prison; and when they were let out and still continued to preach their gospel, they imprisoned them again, hesitating to use harsher means, on account of the

feeling of the people. No imprisonment, however, and not even scourging stopped the men, and daily the number of those who believed their word increased.

In consequence of this preaching, there arose among the Jews in Jerusalem a company of people who believed that Jesus was the Christ, that He had risen from the dead and ascended into Heaven, and that he would come again to judge all men according to the ideal of right living which He taught. They were still members of the church and had no intention of separating from it. They attended the services of the temple and the synagogue; but in addition, they had meetings of their own, eating together in great friendship, breaking bread as Christ had commanded.

At last, a good man named Stephen, who had been appointed, with others, to care for the poor widows of the company that they might not go hungry, entered into a controversy with his brethren who had not accepted Jesus as the Christ. They said that Jesus, whom he upheld, had threatened to destroy the temple and to change the laws of Moses. And when he answered them, maintaining that they were blind to the light of God, as their fathers had been so many times

before them, they cast him out of the synagogue and stoned him till he died. Thus departed Stephen, the first martyr, declaring that he saw Jesus glorified in Heaven, at the right hand of God.

The murder of Stephen was followed by a general persecution of the Christians. They were forced out of the synagogues. They were compelled at last to separate themselves from the ancient church. The Christian Church began as an independent religious society on the day when the congregation stoned Stephen.

The Christians who were thus persecuted after the stoning of Stephen fled in all directions; except the apostles. Wherever they went they carried the gospel with them. They told men everywhere that Christ had come, that God had spoken to men, and that the kingdom of God was at hand. "Repent," they said, "and believe, and be baptized. Then may you enter into the heavenly kingdom."

Philip, who had been a companion of Stephen, went to Samaria and preached Christ to the Samaritans. They were at that time under the influence of a teacher named Simon Magus, who was preaching a religion in which he himself held a high place, being, as he said, the "great power of

God." But the Samaritans, and for a time even Simon, believed Philip. He baptized them, and Peter and John came from Jerusalem and laid their hands upon them, and the Holy Spirit brought great joy into their hearts.

Presently, Philip met on the road a man from Ethiopia, a treasurer of the queen of that country. He had been to Jerusalem to worship, being of the Jews' religion, and as he rode along he read the Bible, and considered the strange things which he had heard during his visit. Meeting Philip going the same way, he asked him to ride with him, and questioned Philip concerning Jesus the Christ. What Philip said so impressed the Ethiopian that he asked to be baptized, and at the next pool of water Philip baptized him.

Thence went Philip to Caesarea by the sea, and there made his home. In so doing, he left Judaism behind him, for Caesarea by the sea was a Roman city, the capital of the Roman governor. Nothing more is heard of Philip for several years, but we get a glimpse of his ministry among the Gentiles of that city in the fact that a Roman soldier, named Cornelius, dreamed at night of Philip's friend, the apostle Peter. Cornelius was a good man, who continually served God and his neigh-

bors, praying and giving alms; but he was a Gentile. Meanwhile, Peter was following Philip in his mission to Caesarea, as he had followed him in his mission to Samaria. He had visited Lydda, where he found a few Christians, and had come to Joppa.

The town was by the sea, near the scene of the old story of Perseus and Andromeda. There Peter found lodgings with a tanner, whose house was by the sea-side. The town was as Jewish in its population and spirit as Caesarea was Gentile, but it looked out over the Mediterranean toward the great new world of the west. The roof of the house was flat, like all the roofs of that country, and Peter went upon the roof to get the cool breeze from the water, and to wait for dinner. He was thinking of the Jewish world behind him and about him, with its prejudices, in which he himself shared, and its unwillingness to admit Gentiles into its friendship. And he was thinking of the vast Gentile world before him, needing the truth which he had to teach and the help which he had to bring. Thus meditating he fell asleep, and dreamed. And in his dream a great sheet was let down from the sky, and in it were all sorts of animals, some good for food and some not good

for food, according to the Jewish law. And a voice said, "Rise, Peter, kill and eat"; to which he replied "Not so, Lord, I have never eaten that which the law calls unclean." Then the voice said, "What God has cleaned, that call not thou unclean." Then he awoke, and as he thought upon his dream he saw that it meant that the old distinctions and separations were to be done away. Men were to eat whatever agreed with them, no matter what the old law forbade, and they were to sit at all men's tables, whether Jew or Gentile.

Then came a knock at the door, and there were messengers from Cornelius. "Come," said Cornelius, "and tell me what I ought to do." So Peter went. Coming to the Gentile's house, he went in, and spoke to Cornelius and his friends as brothers, not in the Jews' manner, and when they desired him he baptized them all.

Thus the next great step was taken. People were admitted to membership in the Christian company without the requirement that they should first be Jews. It was a matter of grave importance because it answered the question which all the Christians were discussing. Are we a Jewish society, keeping all the old rules and only adding new ones? Or are we a Christian church,

apart from the old Judaism, taking what we like and leaving what we like not, and living our own life, and thus appealing not to the Jews only but also to the Gentiles? This matter Peter had decided for himself when he met Cornelius and his friends and baptized them, taking them in straight from the ranks of the Gentiles.

THE ACTS OF ST. PAUL

Acts 9, 13–28.

1. The conversion of Saul, 9:22, 26.
2. Ten years in Syria and Cilicia, 35–45 A. D. Galatians 1:18, 2:1.
3. The three missionary journeys, 45–55.
   - (1) The mission to Galatia.
     - *a.* Cyprus, Antioch, Iconium, Lystra 13, 14.
     - *b.* The conference at Jerusalem, 15.
   - (2) The mission to Macedonia and Achaia.
     - *a.* To Macedonia.
       Philippi, Thessalonica 16–17:14.
     - *b.* To Achaia.
       Athens, 17:15–34.
       Corinth, 18.
   - (3) The mission to Asia.
     - *a.* Ephesus, 19.
     - *b.* The return to Jerusalem 20–21:16.
4. The arrest and imprisonment of Paul, 55–60.
   - (1) Arrested in Jerusalem 21:17–23:16.
   - (2) Imprisoned in Caesarea 23:11–26:32.
   - (3) Shipwrecked, 27–28:15.
   - (4) Imprisoned in Rome, 28:16–31.

MEANWHILE, an event had taken place which was to result in making this great matter plain and final.

In the persecutions which followed the stoning of Stephen, the leader of the attack of the Jews upon the Christians was a young man named Saul. Born in the Roman city of Tarsus, in Asia Minor, where he had seen the glory and the learning of the Gentile world; educated in Jerusalem under the best teacher of the time, Gamaliel; he was a person of very positive convictions, on which he was accustomed to act with all his might. He had contended the more fiercely against the Christians because he was contending bitterly with himself. He had come to see that the old law did not help him, and that, even though he obeyed it, it was not enough for a good life. He felt in his heart an inclination towards sin, keeping him back from his high ideals. Against this inclination, the old religion gave him no sufficient strength. Thus his flesh and his spirit, his will and his conscience, were at war.

Getting permission from the priests at Jerusalem to seek out the Christian heretics and separatists even in Damascus, he set out thither after the excitement of the persecution in Judea. Thus he rode for days silently across the desert, thinking. At last, one day at noon, as he and his companions drew near to Damascus, suddenly there was a

flash like lightning from the sky, and Saul fell from his horse, stunned and blinded. When they led him into the city, he met the chief of the Christians there, named Ananias, whom he had meant to put to death, and said, "I have seen Jesus Christ! I have seen him in the sky in shining light!" And he was baptized. The persecutor had become a Christian.

Thereafter Saul, who presently changed his name to Paul, devoted himself to the service of Christ. He went away for a time into Arabia, to consider his new life. Then he went into Syria and Cilicia: into Syria, north of the Holy Land, whose chief city was Antioch; and into Cilicia, west of Syria, whose chief city was St. Paul's native town of Tarsus. There he stayed perhaps ten years, studying and preaching, making ready for his great work.

If we take the year 30 as the time of the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus Christ, and the year 60 as the time of the martyrdom of St. Paul, the book of the Acts covers a period of thirty years. Saul was converted about the year 35. Barnabas went to Tarsus and brought him back to Antioch about the year 45. The date is determined by the death of Herod in 44.

Then St. Paul started, with Barnabas, on the first of his three missionary journeys.

Leaving Antioch, with the blessings and prayers of the Christians there, they sailed to Cyprus, and visited the two principal towns of that island. Their plan was to begin in the synagogue and preach the gospel to the Jews. This they did in Cyprus, where they saved the governor of the island from the deceits of a sorcerer named Elymas.

Then they sailed to Asia Minor. Between Asia and Europe, like a wide bridge, having the Mediterranean Sea on the south and the Black and Caspian Seas on the north, reaches this middle land of Asia Minor. The first missionary journey was in the eastern part of this country.

Passing through Perga, they came to another Antioch, a great city of the province of Galatia. There Paul preached first to the Jews, then to the Gentiles, and made so many of them Christians that the conservative Jews, seeing the success of this which to them seemed heresy, stirred up the city against them, and put them out. They had the same experience at Iconium, where they were stoned.

At Lystra, the next town, the simple people

thought at first that Paul and Barnabas were two of their Greek gods come to earth, calling Barnabas Jupiter and Paul Mercury, because he was the chief speaker. But men who followed from Antioch and Iconium changed their minds and they assaulted the Christian preachers with stones till they thought they had killed Paul. The apostles escaped, however, with their lives, and went to Derbe. Thence they retraced their steps, encouraging those whom they had persuaded to become Christians, and appointing the older among them to be their ministers, and so returned to Antioch in Syria, whence they had set out.

The immediate effect of this journey was to raise again the question as to the relation between the Christians and the Jews. Paul and Barnabas had made no difference between Jews and Gentiles, and had admitted people by baptism into the Christian church without paying any heed to the ancient initiation by which people were admitted to the Jewish church. This ancient rite was called circumcision. It was plainly commanded in the Bible. One party of Christians said therefore, "Except men be circumcised and keep the law of Moses, they cannot be saved." Another party of Christians said, "New times and needs

require new ways. God has given the Holy Spirit to uncircumcised men whom Peter and Paul have baptized. Former things have passed away." So they met at Jerusalem to consider the matter. "Is the Bible in every particular binding on our consciences? Must we still do exactly as men did a thousand years ago? Shall we admit Jews only, into the Christian church, or shall we frankly set aside the old law and freely admit Gentiles?" This they debated, and the accounts which Paul and Barnabas gave of their mission to Galatia determined the discussion. They decided to follow their own judgment. "It seems good," they said, "to the Holy Ghost and to us to make men Christians without putting upon them the burden of the Jewish law."

Then Paul, this time taking Silas with him, started on his second missionary journey.

His purpose now was to preach in the western part of Asia Minor, as he had previously preached in the eastern part. But this was prevented. For reasons which we are not told, he was unable to go on one side to Ephesus, or on the other side to Bithynia. On he went, therefore, till he came to the extreme town on the border of Asia Minor towards Europe, the city of Troas. In this

neighborhood had stood that famous town of Troy, to which Paris brought stolen Helen in the old story, and over whose possession the Greeks and Trojans fought so long. There in a dream Paul saw an European, a man of Macedonia, saying, "Come over into Macedonia and help us." The next day, he set sail on the Aegean Sea and crossed to Europe.

He found himself in the province of Macedonia, from which Alexander had set forth to conquer the world. Thus he approached Philippi. That was the place where the Roman Empire had its beginning, for there, after the murder of Julius Caesar, Augustus defeated Brutus and Cassius and became the ruler of the world. There began the Christian church in Europe. The preaching of Paul at Philippi was interrupted by a disturbance made by the owners of a fortune-telling slave girl, whom Paul healed of an evil spirit. They accused the Christian preachers of teaching new and strange customs, and they were beaten and put in prison. The next day, however, the magistrates, learning that Paul was a Roman citizen, released them with apologies.

Thence they went to Thessalonica. There the

Jews who did not accept their preaching raised a tumult, as in other places, and brought a mob about the doors of the house where they were staying, and tried to lay hold upon them. They did not succeed, but it seemed wise for Paul and Silas to depart out of their city.

Thus they fared, then, in the two principal places of Macedonia, Philippi and Thessalonica. Moving on thence into the province of Achaia, the land which we call Greece, they found again two cities, Athens and Corinth.

Athens was the great city of learning, of art, of philosophy. There was a famous university there. On Mars' Hill, which overlooked the city, Paul preached to the Epicureans and the Stoics. These men were trying to get the most happiness out of life, but they differed as to the way to do it. The Epicureans said, "Enjoy everything, and you will be happy"; the Stoics said, "Desire nothing, and you will be happy." Neither of them took the service of God and of their neighbors into much account. To them Paul preached the universal God, in whose obedience true joy is to be found, and Jesus Christ whom He has sent. But they showed little interest.

Corinth was the great city of business and wealth. Situated at the isthmus which connected the two parts of the peninsula of Greece, it was mistress of the trade of that part of the world. Paul spent nearly two years in Corinth. The Jews again opposed him, and put him on trial before Gallio, the Roman governor, but Gallio paid no heed to their charges. After that, Paul addressed himself to the Gentiles. Then, making a brief visit to Ephesus, and sailing thence to Caesarea, he made his way to Jerusalem and to Antioch, and so ended his second missionary journey.

The third journey was made to those eastern parts of Asia Minor which in the second journey Paul had passed by. He took up his residence in Ephesus.

Ephesus was a city of religion, as Athens was a city of philosophy and Corinth of business, but the religion was the worship of Diana, in whose honor there was a splendid temple. Paul was so successful in his preaching to the Ephesians that they not only made a great bonfire of their books of magic, but the business of selling silver shrines, little copies of the great shrine of Diana, decreased seriously. Thereupon the shrine-makers raised a

mob against the Christians, shouting for two hours "Great is Diana of the Ephesians!"

From Ephesus Paul revisited Macedonia and Greece. He returned to Asia Minor, stopping at Troas, and meeting a company of people from Ephesus on the sea-shore by Miletus. There he told them that they should see his face no more, and they wept, and kissed him. He landed at Tyre, went down along the coast road through Caesarea, and so came to Jerusalem.

At Jerusalem, his old enemies, the orthodox Jews, seized him in the temple, crying out upon him as the great breaker of the law and the foe of the church, and almost tearing him in pieces. The Roman governor rescued him out of their hands, but hearing that more than forty men had bound themselves under an oath that they would neither eat nor drink till they had killed the heretic he sent Paul by night, under guard of a company of soldiers, to Caesarea. There he lay two years in prison till, on his appeal of his case to Caesar, he was sent to Rome. He was shipwrecked on the way, but found refuge on the island of Malta, and at last arrived at the capital of the world.

There the Acts leaves him, in charge of Roman

Le Sueur

ST. PAUL AT EPHESUS

officers, but having the liberty of his own hired house, awaiting trial, and preaching the gospel. It was remembered among the Christians that the trial went against him, and that he was condemned as a disturber of the peace. Outside the city he was put to death, being beheaded.

THE NEW TESTAMENT

THE EPISTLES

THE EPISTLES OF ST. PAUL, DURING THE MISSIONARY JOURNEYS

1. To the Galatians. Christianity and Judaism.
   (1) Paul's divine authority, 1, 2.
   (2) The old religion and the new, 3, 4.
   (3) The liberty of faith, 5, 6.
2. To the Thessalonians, I. The Second Coming of Christ.
   The dead shall share with the living in the joy of the Second Coming.
3. To the Thessalonians, II. The Second Coming of Christ.
   The time is distant; meanwhile do your daily work.
4. To the Corinthians, I. Admonitions and Answers
   (1) Admonitions.
      a. As to party divisions, 1–4.
      b. As to marrying one's stepmother, 5.
      c. As to going to law, 6.
   (2) Answers.
      a. Concerning marriage, 7.
      b. Concerning food offered to idols, 8.
      c. Concerning the Lord's Supper, 10, 11.
      d. Concerning the tongues, 12, 14.
      e. Concerning charity, 13.
      f. Concerning the resurrection, 15.
      g. Concerning the collection for the poor, 16.
5. To the Corinthians, II. Two Letters.

(1) The letter which made the Corinthians repent, 10–13.
(2) The letter after they repented, 1–9.

5. To the Romans. Christianity and Judaism.
(1) Gentiles and Jews alike need salvation, 1–3.
(2) Salvation not by law, but by faith and grace, 4, 5.
(3) Freedom from law does not permit Christians to sin, 6–8.
(4) Failure of law does not mean that Jews are finally rejected, 9–11.
(5) The life of faith, 12–16.

THE word "epistle" is an old-fashioned name for a letter, as the word "prophecy" is an old-fashioned name for a sermon.

One difference between the prophecies and the epistles is that the prophecies are concerned with nations, while the epistles are concerned with churches. The prophets are interested, like modern editors of newspapers, in the affairs of the world, in the progress of peoples, in the fortunes of wars. The apostles are interested, like modern preachers of sermons, in the condition of the congregation, in the affairs of the parish, in the local good and evil. This is largely because the people to whom the epistles are addressed had no place among the nations, and no part in politics, being under the dominion of Rome.

Another difference is that the epistles instead of looking, like the prophecies, for some future and unknown deliverer, declare that the deliverer has come.

Otherwise, the epistles are very much like the prophecies. The prophecies are sermons which were first spoken to the people and then written out; the epistles are sermons which were first written out and then sent to be read to the people.

Of the twenty-one letters in the New Testament, fourteen bear the name of St. Paul and are conveniently called the Pauline Epistles. The other seven are by different writers and are called the Catholic Epistles. The word "catholic," in this sense, means general; *i. e.* most of these letters are addressed to people in general, not to any person or church in particular.

The Pauline Epistles are arranged in the Bible in the order of their size, beginning with long letters such as Romans and Corinthians and ending with the little note to Philemon. After Philemon, indeed, comes Hebrews, but this is because of a doubt whether it should be included among the letters of St. Paul, or not. The epistles are easier to understand when they are arranged not in order of size but in order of time. This arrange-

ment makes two groups: first, the epistles which were written during St. Paul's missionary journeys; and second, the epistles which were written during his imprisonment in Rome.

The letters of the first group were written between the years 45 and 55. They begin with Galatians, and include the double epistles to the Thessalonians and to the Corinthians, and end with Romans.

It is uncertain whether the earliest epistle of St. Paul was written to the Galatians or to the Thessalonians. But the Galatians were the people to whom he preached in the first of his three missionary journeys, and the matter concerning which he wrote to them is the question which that mission raised. We may conveniently begin, then, with Galatians.

The Galatian churches were in Antioch, Iconium, Derbe, and Lystra. Many of the converts made in these places were Gentiles. The acceptance of these people by baptism without requiring them to be circumcised had led to that conference in Jerusalem at which the matter was decided. It was there settled that the Christian church was different from the Jewish church, and was not under obligation to keep the Jewish laws.

The matter was decided, but all the Christians in Jerusalem were not satisfied. They had all been Jews, brought up in the Jewish church and devoutly attached to it, and some of them were not ready for so serious a step. They could not believe that the old laws did not bind men still. Even Peter, who had seen the vision of the great sheet, was impressed by their arguments, and though he had dined with Gentiles at Antioch, thus showing that he considered them as good as Jews, when some of these conservative brethren came he changed his mind. Peter and Paul had a sharp debate about it.

Some of these conservative persons had gone to Galatia and disturbed the converts of St. Paul. "It is all a mistake," they said. "Except ye be circumcised and keep the law of Moses, ye cannot be saved." As for Paul, "He is not an apostle," they said, "He never knew the Lord Jesus. You must not depend on what he says."

Under these circumstances, St. Paul wrote the Epistle to the Galatians. You see how he begins by saying that he is an apostle indeed; and by reproving the Galatians for listening to these disturbing teachers. Then he compares Christianity with Judaism, the gospel with the law. The law,

he says, was meant to prepare men for the gospel. To go back to it is like going back to the primary school. It is to exchange liberty for bondage.

The letters to the Thessalonians and to the Corinthians recall the mission of St. Paul first to Macedonia, and then to Greece, in the second of his journeys. They were written on account of reports which came to St. Paul from these churches and in answer to questions which they asked.

Paul having left Thessalonica in consequence of a mob which assaulted the house where he was staying, was anxious to know how the Christians there were enduring that persecution. Were they still true to him, and to the gospel which he taught, or had they fallen away? Then when Timothy came from Thessalonica and reported that all was well, bringing good tidings of their faith and charity, and saying that they greatly desired to see Paul again, even as he desired to see them, he wrote this first letter. He recalled his visit to them, and spoke of the friendship in Christ then happily begun, and told them how glad he was to learn of their endurance in the gospel. He added certain warnings regarding sins to which they were particularly tempted in their town. Finally, he comforted those who were in mourning

among them, assuring them that when Christ came again, the dead should rise to meet Him with the living.

The expectation of the coming of Christ, however, took so strong a hold on the minds of the Christians in Thessalonica that some of them stopped work. They gave up their business. They said, "If the world is so near its end, and Christ may come next week, why interest ourselves in the affairs of this life?" Paul therefore wrote again to tell them that the best preparation for that Second Coming was the doing of their daily duty. "We do not know," he said, "When Christ will come. Many things must happen first. Be patient; be good and faithful. Attend diligently to your own business."

The letters to the Corinthians, like those to the Thessalonians, were written on account of reports and questions. St. Paul was told that the Corinthian Christians were divided among themselves, some saying that they were followers of Paul, others that they were followers of Peter. He was told also that they were going to law one with another, bringing to the Roman courts the differences which they ought to settle in brotherly love. Another report gave an account of a man who had

married his stepmother, and who was nevertheless permitted to continue in the company of the Christians. The first Epistle to the Corinthians begins with these unpleasant matters.

Then the apostle answers various questions. It is not well, he says, for Christians to marry unbelievers. It is not well to eat food which has been offered to idols; of course, idols are nothing; and one kind of food is as good as another, so far as religion is concerned, but we must not needlessly give offence.

He deals with the two kinds of Christian services; the service of the Holy Communion and the service of the Holy Spirit. As for the service of the Holy Communion, which consists in partaking of the Lord's Supper, they are to enter into it with reverence; not lightly, as if it were an ordinary meal, but remembering the Lord Jesus. As for the service of the Holy Spirit, which consists in speaking with tongues, they are to know that better than all speech with tongues is the plain word which everybody can understand. The sound of the tongues expresses their own great joy, but the greatest thing in the world is charity, whereby we do good to others.

The epistle closes with a chapter on the resur-

rection of the body. We must die, and be buried, and be raised again from the dead; not in the natural body which we wear and use in this present life but in the spiritual body which shall be fitted for the uses of the life to come.

This first epistle was followed by a second, perhaps a third also. The fact that the letter as we have it begins by expressing gratitude for the repentance of the Corinthians after their bad conduct, and then continues in sharp rebuke for bad conduct from which they have not departed and for which they have not repented, suggests that there are two letters here, of which the second comes first.

In that case, St. Paul first wrote what is contained in chapters 10-13. He spoke sharply to the Corinthians for their disregard of his counsel, and their disrespect for him personally, and threatened to say worse things to them face to face. Then they came to a better mind, and he wrote the chapters 1-9. He made them sorry, he says, but he did it with tears, on account of his great love for them. He speaks of his labors for their sake in the gospel. Finally, he asks them to contribute to the collection which he is making for the poor Christians of Jerusalem.

The Epistle to the Romans was written at the close of the third missionary journey. St. Paul had come to Corinth in the course of his last visits to his churches before setting out for Jerusalem. It had long been his purpose to visit Rome, and to go on farther even into Spain, but the future was uncertain. In the meantime, he writes what, if he were present, he would preach.

The subject is the relation between Judaism and Christianity, which he had considered in the letter to the Galatians. But the situation is different. The Christians in Galatia had been tempted to over-value Judaism, and thus to return to the old law. The Christians in Rome were tempted to under-value Judaism, and to disregard all law in the new freedom of the gospel.

St. Paul begins by showing the failure of both Gentile and Jewish religions. The Gentile world is bad, and the Jewish world has fallen far below its ideals. Christianity comes bringing men help. This help consists in the strength of God which men may have by uniting themselves with Him in Jesus Christ. The strength of God is called grace, and the act by which we enter into union with Christ is called faith. We are thus saved, not by

our own efforts, not by works, but by faith and grace.

At the same time, St. Paul guards the Roman Christians against two errors. They are not to think that because salvation is of God, not of themselves, they are therefore any more free to sin. And they are not to think that because the gospel has now taken the place of the law, the Jews are therefore cast away forever.

THE EPISTLES OF ST. PAUL, DURING THE ROMAN IMPRISONMENT

1. To the Colossians. Against a False Philosophy.
   The worship of angels instead of Christ.
   The keeping of fasts and days instead of liberty
2. To Philemon. Concerning a Runaway Slave.
3. To the Ephesians. A Circular Letter.
   God has called us to great blessing. We must live worthy of our calling.
4. To the Philistines. Thanks for gifts.

The Pastoral Epistles.

I and II Timothy, and Titus. Counsels to Ministers.

To the Hebrews. Encouragement under Persecution.

1. Consider the glory of our religion.
   (1) Jesus is higher than the angels, 1, 2.
   (2) Exalted above Moses, 3, 4.
   (3) Exalted above Aaron, 5–7.
   The order of Melchizedek.
   (4) Our divine high priest, 8–10.
2. Consider the example of the heroes of the faith, 11–13.

THE prison of St. Paul in Rome was his own house. There, at least, he spent two years while he was awaiting his trial. A soldier, indeed, guarded him night and day, to whose arm Paul

was chained, but he had liberty to see his friends. Day by day, he preached the gospel, now to one soldier, now to another, until the news of the coming of God among us in Jesus Christ became known to many. This is of interest to us because presently it was by Roman soldiers that the gospel was first preached in Britain.

One of the friends and disciples who came to visit Paul was a man named Epaphras. He came from Colosse, a city east of Ephesus. He had learned the Christian religion from Paul, probably during the apostle's mission in that neighborhood, and had taught it to the Colossians. Paul was troubled to hear from Epaphras that the Colossians had fallen into various errors. It was the belief of some people at that time that the world, with all that is in it, including the body of man, is wholly bad; and that God, who is wholly good, is very far away. This belief, which afterwards, under the name of Canosticism, attracted many Christians and led them into error, had two results. Men said, in the first place, that if God is so far away He must govern the world by means of angels, and so they thought a great deal about the angels, instead of thinking of Christ, in whom God and man are truly united. And they said, in

the second place, that if our bodies are so evil we must make them as uncomfortable as possible, we must beat and starve them. Thus they returned to the old rules about the relation between food and religion, instead of taking the blessings of God with joy and thanksgiving.

The letter which Paul wrote to the Colossians about these matters was carried to them by a man from their part of the country named Tychicus. With him went a runaway slave, named Onesimus. Onesimus had run away from Colosse, from the home of his master, Philemon. He had tried to hide himself in Rome. There he had become acquainted with St. Paul, who had brought him out of the worse slavery of sin. Onesimus had become a Christian. Philemon was a Christian already. Paul told Onesimus that it was his duty to go back. The time was indeed to come when Christianity would make slavery impossible, but such great changes come very slowly. Meanwhile, the duty of Christian slaves was to be as good slaves as they knew how. And Christian masters must be brotherly masters. Onesimus, accordingly, went back, carrying a letter from Paul to Philemon. "Take back Onesimus!" he said, "not now as a servant, but as a brother beloved."

A third letter, written about the same time and sent to the same region of country, is that which is addressed to the Ephesians. It seems to have been intended not only for the Ephesians but for other churches also, to be passed about and read to the Christians of several places—Ephesus and Laodicea and Colosse. It does not refer to St. Paul's long stay in Ephesus, nor does it carry greetings to any Ephesian friends. Indeed, some think that the real letter to the Ephesians is the last chapter of the Romans. This chapter is a commendation of a Christian woman named Phebe to the friendship of a number of people whose names are mentioned. The fact that many of these are Ephesian names suggests that Phebe was starting out for Ephesus. Anyhow, the epistle which is called Ephesians was probably meant for all the churches of that neighborhood. It is a practical letter, reminding the readers of the love of God for them, and urging them to be worthy of it. It is addressed not only to fathers and mothers, but to children, whose chief duty, St. Paul says, is obedience.

Thus went Tychicus, over the way from Rome to Ephesus and Colosse, bearing these three letters.

A fourth letter of the Roman imprisonment was written to the people of Philippi. One of their number, Epaphroditus, had come to Rome bringing gifts to St. Paul from the Philippian Christians. These first European converts had been very faithful and devoted to him. He writes to thank them for their thoughtfulness and affection. Epaphroditus has been ill in Rome, and is thus returning to Philippi sooner than he had expected. Paul is careful to inform the Philippians, that they may not suspect their messenger of having lost his courage. Paul hears that two women of the Philippian congregation have had a quarrel, and he urges them to make it up. Otherwise, the letter is full of praise and gratitude. The imprisonment is long, and the outcome of the trial is doubtful, but Paul is full of faith and joy.

Four other letters have the name of St. Paul attached to them in our Bible; two to Timothy, one to Titus, one to the Hebrews.

The two to Timothy and the one to Titus are called the Pastoral Epistles, because they are addressed to Christian pastors. They are perhaps related to St. Paul as the First Gospel is related to St. Matthew, and the Fourth to St. John; that is, the heart of the letters is the word and spirit of

St. Paul, but other writers, in a different manner, and with a different idea of faith and works, and in a different situation, have made additions. Very precious, in the Second Epistle to Timothy, is the record of what we may call the last words of Paul. "I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith."

The Epistle to the Hebrews was addressed by an unknown writer to Christians who were in the pain of persecution. So sorely were they made to suffer for their faith that there was danger lest they give it up. The epistle is written to encourage them. It shows how glorious is the religion which they have received; Christ is greater than Moses and higher than the angels, our high priest who prays for us in Heaven; not like the priests of the old religion, coming in orderly succession, offering their sacrifices and giving place to others, but called directly by God, like Melchizedek in Abraham's day, and abiding forever. The epistle recites the names of former heroes of the faith, and urges the reader to follow their example.

THE EPISTLES OF ST. JAMES AND ST. JUDE AND ST. PETER AND ST. JOHN

1. The epistles of the brothers of Jesus.
   (1) James. Concerning the Temptation of the World.
   (2) Jude. Concerning the Temptations of the Flesh.
2. The epistles of the apostles of Jesus.
   (1) Peter
      I. A Good Life the Best Reply to Persecution.
      II. The Promise of Christ's Coming.
   (2) John.
      I. A Good Life the Best Proof of Faith and Love.
      II. To a Lady; Concerning Hospitality.
      III. To Gaius; Concerning Hospitality.

OF the other epistles of the New Testament, two bear the names of brothers of Jesus, James and Jude; and five bear the names of apostles, Peter and John.

The epistle of St. James is like the book of Proverbs. It is filled with various kinds of good advice. It is addressed to Christians who are meeting temptation without much success. They

are disposed to think more highly of rich Christians than of poor ones. Some of them are themselves rich, and have made their money by such injustice towards those who have worked for them, and are spending it in such waste and luxury, that they are warned that they shall be made to weep and howl for the miseries which shall come upon them. Some who pride themselves on their faith think that they will be acceptable to God on that account, without regard to their lives. The writer has his opinions of all such, and expresses it with great plainness.

The epistle of St. Jude is also concerned with unworthy Christians. There have already appeared among the faithful false and dangerous teachers, who are denying the truth of God and of Christ, and are persuading men that in order to be religious one does not need to be good. They are themselves living in sin, and are leading others into sin. The writer denounces them, classes them with the fallen angels and with the people of Sodom and Gomorrah, and promises that they also, and all who go with them, shall be destroyed with fire.

These letters of James and Jude show that the Christians were in danger of falling into indif-

ference and into immorality. They needed to be kept true to their ideals of right living. The first epistle of St. Peter reveals another danger,—the peril of persecution. As in the epistle to the Hebrews, the Christians are urged to be brave and patient in the midst of unfair and cruel treatment, and to reply to it, not by attempting to protect themselves, but by living such good lives as shall make their enemies ashamed of their enmity. But the second epistle returns to the charges of unchristian conduct, quoting nearly the whole of Jude, and adding hard words about some who are teaching that Christ shall never come again. It is foolish, these teachers said, to expect a new heaven and a new earth; all things remain as they were from the foundation of the world.

The false teachers appear also in the epistles of St. John. The first epistle emphasizes again and again the truth that the way to show one's love for God is to keep His commandments; he that doeth righteousness is righteous. Many false prophets are gone out into the world. There is a spirit of antichrist abroad, denying that Jesus is the Son of God. The second epistle warns a Christian lady against receiving false teachers into her house. Many deceivers are entered into

the world who confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. The third epistle praises a man named Gaius for his hospitality towards visiting Christians, but condemns Diotrephes for refusing to receive them. The church in that place seems to be divided.

Looking back, now, over the twenty-one epistles, we see that they are the record of two conflicts.

One of these is a contention between two ways of thinking. The separation of the Christians from the Jewish church made immediately two opposed companies, the Christians and the Jews. We saw how the Jews at Jerusalem stoned the Christians, and how St. Paul was in like danger at their hands wherever he went; finally, when he returned to Jerusalem, they tried to kill him, and succeeded in putting an end to his ministry. But in addition to this difference between the Christians and the Jews, there was a difference within the Christian church between those on one side who, though they were Christians, liked the old ways and were very unwilling to depart from them, and those on the other side who felt that the old ways were a bondage out of which they had escaped into a glorious liberty. One side said, "Let us change little"; the other said, "Let us change much."

Thus they contended as to the need of keeping the old law in the new church. One said, "Except ye be circumcized ye cannot be saved"; the other said, "Circumcision availeth nothing, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature." It is this debate which appears in Galatians and in Romans. In spirit, it is the universal and everlasting discussion between the conservatives and the progressives, between the men of the old learning and the men of the new learning.

There was also a contention between two ways of living. On one side was the teaching and example of Jesus, presenting the ideal life. He insisted on a goodness which required the obedience not only of the hands and lips but of the heart. He said that the love of God is shown not only by sacrifices and prayers and loyalty to the church, but by keeping His commandments; and that the love of our neighbor means that we shall love even our enemies. On the other side was human nature, and the temptations of the world, the flesh and the devil. Every epistle speaks of the bad behavior of some Christians. They had to be warned not to lie or steal. They had to be kept from quarrelling. They had to be urged to separate themselves from the sins of their pagan neighbors. As the years

pass, and the epistles of James and Jude, and Peter and John appear, good men are almost in despair. Not only has the first enthusiasm given way to indifference, but indifference is falling into immorality. There are both false Christians and false teachers. This also is a universal and everlasting contention. The fact that the same struggle between good and evil is still going on, both about us and within us, helps us to read these old letters as if they were written today to us.

THE NEW TESTAMENT

THE REVELATION

THE REVELATION

1. The seven churches, 1–3.
2. The seven visions.
   - (1) The sealed book, 4, 5.
   - (2) The seven seals, 6, 7.
   - (3) The seven trumpets, 8–11.
   - (4) The seven mystical figures, 12–14.
   - (5) The seven golden bowls, 15, 16.
   - (6) The destruction of Rome, 17–20.
   - (7) The foundation of New Jerusalem, 21, 22.

ALL along the way which this last book brings to an end, the Bible people have been in contention with the great powers of the world. It has been like the story of a hero whose road of adventure takes him through the country of the giants.

First, the Egyptian giant seized the people and made them slaves. They escaped at last, and settled in Palestine, after hard fighting with the people of the land and with their neighbors round about, and became a strong nation, which misgovernment divided into two kingdoms. The Assyrian giant attacked one of the kingdoms, and carried the people captive to Nineveh. The

Chaldean giant attacked the other kingdom, and carried the people captive to Babylon. The Persian giant conquered the Chaldean, and permitted the people to return to Palestine. But the Greek giant conquered the Persian and brought upon the people the persecution which appears in the book of Daniel. Finally, the Roman giant conquered the Greek. The people who had been divided into two kingdoms were now divided into two churches. The Roman giant attacked the Jewish church, and in the year 70 accomplished that destruction of Jerusalem which is predicted in the gospels. The beginning of the attack of the Roman giant upon the Christian church appears in the book of Revelation.

In the Acts the Romans are almost always friendly to the Christians. The Jews rise up in mobs against the Christian preachers, but the Romans protect them. The Jews bring the Christians before the courts but the Roman judges acquit them. In the year 64, however, came an event which changed all this. That was the year of the great fire in Rome. It burned and burned, till the whole city was threatened with destruction. After the fire was over, people began to say that it had been set by Nero, the emperor.

So many said it, and so loud and bitter were their voices, that the emperor looked about for somebody on whose shoulders he might put the blame. And he found the Christians.

It is likely that Paul had been tried before this time, and condemned and beheaded; Peter was probably the leader of the Roman Christians. The Roman people knew little about them except that they never went either to the church or to the theatre. That is, they kept themselves apart from both the religion and the amusement of the city. And even the Jews hated them. The Christians, then, having no friends, were convenient persons on whom to put the blame of burning Rome. Nero accused the Christians. They were scourged, they were thrown amongst savage lions in the Colosseum; they were daubed with pitch and fastened to stakes and set on fire in Nero's pleasure gardens, where now stands the great church of St. Peter. And the persecution, thus begun, continued for more than two hundred years. The fact that a person was a Christian made him liable at any time to arrest and punishment, as if he were a thief or a murderer. The whole power of the Roman Empire, the whole strength of the Roman giant, was exerted to

crush out the religion of Christ. Finally, the Christian church conquered the Roman Empire. But that splendid story is in church history. Only the beginning of it is in the Revelation.

The key to the meaning of the book of Revelation is hidden in the last verse of the thirteenth chapter. "Here is wisdom. Let him that hath understanding count the number of the beast; for it is the number of a man; and his number is six hundred three score and six." Now, in Hebrew the letters of the alphabet were used as numbers, and the name Neron Caesar written in Hebrew letters makes 666. The beast, then, of whom the writer had just been saying that as many as would not worship his image should be killed, was the Caesar Nero, the beginner of the persecution. According to the law of the Roman state all people were required to worship the image of the emperor, under pain of death. This was the test which was applied to Christians. If they would worship the image they were set free; if they refused—as, being Christians, they must refuse—they were put to death.

Thus the book is dated by this sentence. It belongs to those early days of persecution. The pur-

pose of it is to encourage those who are suffering at the hands of the Romans, as the purpose of Daniel was to encourage those who were suffering at the hands of the Greeks. Daniel describes Antiochus as a beast with a little horn, because he does not dare to write more plainly. Revelation describes Nero as a beast whose number is 666, for the same reason. The people for whom the book was written knew what was meant.

Even with this key, much of the book is still a mystery to us, but it is clear at least that the tribulations which are described in it are those which are befalling the Christians, or which shall presently, for their cruelty, befall the Romans. The Christian martyrs are seen before the throne of God, crying, "How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?"

The writer declares that Rome—which he calls Babylon, because he does not dare to speak the name aloud—shall be utterly and terribly destroyed. "I saw another angel come down from Heaven, having great power, and the earth was lightened with his glory. And he cried mightily with a strong voice saying, 'Babylon the great is

fallen, is fallen, and is become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird.' "

And Jerusalem—by which he means the Christian church—shall become the joy and crown of the whole earth. "I saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down from God out of Heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a great voice out of Heaven saying, 'Behold the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them and be their God. And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain; for the former things are passed away.' "

The Bible ends with this great promise. Intended to encourage those who were being persecuted by the Romans, it has been a source of strength and consolation ever since. Out of all tribulation, into all joy, shall the Lord bring those who put their trust in Him. At last shall be established over all the earth that divine kingdom of righteousness and peace and blessing for which all the prophets and apostles worked and waited. He

whose first coming is described in the gospels shall come again to judge the world. "Even so come, Lord Jesus," says the writer of the Revelation. "The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen."

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